ACROSS / A13
Lawyers ready suits versus coal mining

BUSINESS / B1
Philamlife to acquire 51% of Ayala Life

ENTERTAINMENT / D1
2 deaf actors take their unusual romance to the big screen

WORLD / A21
R&B singer Chris Brown sentenced for assault

SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY: Served alongside 10 US presidents, including his brother John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, August 27, 2009 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 260 P15

US immigrants fight to bring in adult kids

SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA—EVELYN SANtos began her quest for a green card nearly two decades ago, hoping someday that she and her family could leave the Philippines and start a better life in the United States.

The opportunity came in 2007, but with a painful catch: Her two elder sons were now too old to qualify as dependents, so they would have to stay behind.

US IMMIGRANTS A5

Erap ordered slay, Mancao tells court

COMBAT MISSION: A truck full of Marines soldiers passes by a B-300 tank in Ungkaya Pukan in Basilan. American soldiers are reportedly "embedded" among their Filipino counterparts in the antiterrorism fight.

US troops' combat role in RP revealed

By Nikko Dizon

THE WOMAN WHO BLEW THE WHISTLE on a hard move involving the RP-US Balikatan exercises said American soldiers were purportedly "embedded" with Filipino troops in combat situations in Mindanao, and that the United States had taken part in the "planning of combat operations" against terrorist and Moro targets.

With news from the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines serving as her bodyguards, retired Navy Lt. Nancy Gadian yesterday faced the media in a press conference organized by the archbishop Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

Copies of her affidavit detailing her observations while stationed in Mindanao and affirming her belief that US troops were based permanently in the country were distributed at the press conference.

Gadian's lawyer, Evelyn Ursua, said the

US TROOPS' I A9

Cop affirms affidavit on Dacer case

By Marlon Ramos

THREE MONTHS AFter his awaited return to the country, former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao yesterday testified that then President Joseph Estrada was the brains behind the 2000 killing of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito.

In a 15-minute testimony before Judge Myra Fernandez of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 10, Mancao confirmed the contents of his affidavit on the existence of "Operation Delta" and his role in the twin murders. his lawyer Ferdinand Topacio told the hearing.

Topacio said Mancao also told the court that Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who was then chief of the Philippine National Police, received direct orders from Malacañang to "neutralize" Dacer.

Both Estrada—who was deposed in January 2001, convicted of plunder in September 2007, and swiftly pardoned by President Macapagal-Ar-

ERAP ORDERED A4

Sen. Ted Kennedy loses fight vs cancer

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS—Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, the last surviving brother to a political dynasty and one of the most influential senators in US history, died on Tuesday night at his home on Cape Cod after a yearlong struggle with brain cancer. He was 77.

In 47 years in the Senate, Ted Kennedy served alongside 10 presidents—his brother John Fitzgerald Kennedy among them—compiling an impressive list of legislative achievements on healthcare, civil rights, education, immigration and more.

His only run for the White House ended in defeat in 1980. More than a quarter-century later, however, he handed then Sen. Barack Obama an endorsement at a critical point in the campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, explicitly likening the young contender to President Kennedy.

To the American public, Kennedy was best known as the last surviving son of America's most glamorous political family.

SEN. TED A9

Lakas-Kampi downplays poll results

By TJ Burgonio and Leila B. Salaverria

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRAtion is putting a brave face on the poor performance of its possible standard-bearer—Vice President Mali de Castro. Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro or Rayund Fernandez—according to the latest Pulse Asia survey.

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. has challenged De Castro from the top, while Teodoro and Fernandez, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), remained at the bottom of the heap.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday downplayed the survey results, and predicted that whoever the administration Lakas-Kampi-CMD anoints

LAKAS-KAMPI A4

Salonga urges solons to impeach Ombudsman

By Leila B. Salaverria

PARTYLIST LAWMAKERS SEEking the impeachment of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez accused her yesterday of prostituting her office and declared that under her watch many crimes went unpunished, resulting in a climate of impunity.

Former Senator President Jovito Salonga, who heads a civil society that is spearheading the impeachment complaint, spoke before the House justice committee to support efforts to substantiate the charges against Gutierrez.

"I hope and pray that you will have the serenity of mind, the courage to change the things you can and the wisdom to know the difference," said Salonga, who was only allowed to speak after a debate that led to the temporary suspension of rules.

The 89-year-old elder statesman also said that while the committee members have the discretion to do what they believe is right, this "is not beyond

SALONGA A5

SIGNATURE DRIVE: Volunteers solicit signatures endorsing Sen. Benigno Aquino III's presidential run outside the Redemptorist Church in Baclaran.

Drive on to gather 1M signatures for Noynoy

By Nina Calleja

THE GROUP THAT CONVINCED Corazon Aquino to run for president in the 1986 snap election rallied by dictator Ferdinand Marcos has embarked on a similar campaign.

The group is working to gather more than a million signatures to encourage the late former President's only son, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, to also run for president.

This time, the campaign's prime movers is Reginaldo Rivera, a son of Joaquin "Chino" Rivera, the newspaper publisher who began a signature campaign rallied Cory Aquino for President Movement 24 years ago.

The movement eventually persuaded Cory to run against Marcos in the presidential election on Feb. 7, 1986.

Yesterday, a booth, surrounded by tarpaulins with the slogan "Noynoy for President," was set up on Redemptorist Street beside the Redemptorist Church in Paranaque City.

The booth had a yellow umbrella for a shade.

In an hour just before lunch, vendors, churchgoers, pedestrians and those in their cars had dropped by and signed the petition.

Some asked questions and said it was better for Noynoy to seek the vice presidency (Still),

DRIVE A9

Is RP politics ready for a John Adams?

By Ernnie G. Yolardo
Entertainment Editor

NEED WE GO BACK TO THE 18th century to find an upright politician?

A preview of the new series "John Adams," about the second president of the United States, hosted by the US Embassy and HBO Asia on Tuesday,

IS RP AS A

WEATHER FORECAST
FORECAST: Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while Visayas and Mindanao will have partly cloudy to mostly cloudy skies with scattered thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds coming from the southwest

Second FRONTPAGE

BABA LUMABAS LALO ANG LOOB NG MGA PERYAHOOT

6/45
11 27 33 38

SUERTRES
4 5 0

(All in exact order)
FOUR DIGIT
6 9 4 1

1 8 6
4 2 1

MEGALOTTO 6/45
4 11 22 24 39 45
P13,812,982.20

Palparan aide acquitted

IN THE KNOW

Special courts

[illegible] 15, 2007, after a meeting with Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., Ermita said the Supreme Court would set up special tribunals to summarily try cases of suspects in extrajudicial killings.

Perez said the move would be "part of our effort to relieve" such cases and would rank "high in our priority list."

Then last month, the high court announced that it had designated 99 regional trial courts as special tribunals, with orders to hear cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

The Supreme Court's preliminary guidelines [illegible] ... shall be terminated within 60 days" from its commencement, and "judgments shall be rendered within 30 days from submission for decision or resolution, whether personal or [illegible]."

The high court also ruled that its guidelines will not affect special courts, the branches where the cases had been raffled off should follow the guidelines for the special courts.

It noted that the special courts is to submit a status report on cases of extrajudicial and summary killings every tenth day of the succeeding month. It said failure to do so would result in administrative sanctions.

By Marlon Ramos

A MANILA COURT YESTERDAY CLEARED AN associate of retired Gen. Jovito Palparan of complicity in the country's first-ever court case involving extrajudicial killings, saying the exclusion of the so-called "butcher of mirasol" from the charges weakened the case.

In a landmark ruling, Judge Silvino Pampilo A. of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 26 acquitted Aniceto "Edong" Flores in the May 26, 2002 murder of Eldimer "Dayo" Napoles.

Describing the case as "half-baked," the judge also dismissed the frustrated case filed against Flores, a former commando — called trained military agent, by Napoles' colleague Pearl Londriles.

Napoles, then the provincial coordinator of the Bayan Muna party-list in Masbate, and Londriles were shot by two unknowns in calling more in front of their office in Cabezon City, Oriental Mindoro.

Napoles died on the spot while Londriles narrowly escaped the attack.

Crucial witness

In his 16-page ruling, Pampilo said the prosecution's failure to present Londriles as "the most important and crucial witness" during the trial spelled the doom to the cases against Flores.

The cases, he said, could have fared better in court had the Department of Justice (DOJ) included Palparan in the charge sheet.

"It is unfortunate that in the two separate proceedings it to the little fellows who easily get the axe, but the bosses come out unscathed," Pampilo said in his order.

Along with Army Sgt. Rizal Hilario, the DOJ dismissed the cases against Palparan for lack of evidence from testifies after the killing.

"The DOJ prosecutor should have included Gen. Palparan in the case. In that way, I could have made use of the concept of command responsibility in handing out my decision," Pampilo said.

The judge, on the other hand, directed that the cases against Flores' co-accused, Leny Aparato, to be archived as the suspect remains at large.

Special courts

It was the first court ruling on extrajudicial killings allegedly perpetrated by government-backed operatives of militant organizations.

Pampilo's win was one of the 99 special courts that Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno created last year to hasten the resolution of unsolved murders of activists and journalists.

None of the state prosecutors and private lawyers who handled the case were present during the promulgation of the seven-year-old case yesterday morning.

Survey says VP race a Chiz-Loren toss-up

THE VICE PRESIDENCY WILL be a toss-up between Senator Francis Escudero and Loren Legarda if elections were held today, a Pulse Asia survey conducted from July 28 to Aug. 10 showed.

The same survey showed Senators Jinggoy Estrada, Manuel Roxas II, Pia Cayetano, Ramon Revilla Jr. and Former Senate President Franklin Drilon leading the pack of probable mid-term winners.

Asked who they would vote for if the midterm elections were held today, 21 percent of 1,800 adult respondents named Escudero and 19 percent named Legarda.

They could place the two senators in a statistical tie, given the survey's margin of error of plus-minus two percentage points.

A similar Pulse Asia survey conducted last May showed Escudero getting 24 percent and Legarda 21 percent.

In the latest survey, the two senators were followed by Vice President Noli de Castro (13 percent), tapped 14th percent last May); Sharon Mayor Jejomar Binay (12 percent, similar to last May's 10 percent) and Senator Francis Pangilinan (up three points to 12 percent).

No Noynoy

Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, who suddenly figured in the presidential and vice presidential stakes following the death on Aug. 1 of his mother, former President Corazon Aquino, was not included in the survey.

Escudero and Legarda were the top vice presidential bets in Luzon, excluding Metro Manila (where they tied at 21 percent) and Mindanao (Escudero, 22 percent to Legarda 20 percent).

Escudero led in Metro Manila (26 percent), while de Castro was the top choice in the Visayas (22 percent).

By socio-economic class, the poorest class E was most supportive of Legarda (22 percent), while the first-off class ABC went for Escudero (22 percent). Legarda (19 percent) and Binay (18 percent).

Class D, the biggest group, was for Escudero (23 percent), Legarda (19 percent) and De Castro (18 percent).

Error margins for the other senatorial seats were plus-or-minus six points for Mitos Magsaysay, plus-or-minus four points for the rest of Lacson, and plus-or-minus five points for the Vizcaya and Estradas.

Senatorial survey

When asked to pick up to 12 senatorial bets from a list of 75 personalities, close to half of the respondents chose Estrada (48.3 percent), Roxas (48.3 percent), Cayetano (46.6 percent), Revilla (46.4 percent) and Drilon (46.3 percent).

Others with a statistical chance of winning are Senators Marina Defensor Santiago (45.2 percent), Jinky Madrigal (38.0 percent), resigned National Economic and Development Authority chief Ralph Recto (27.9 percent), Binay (27.5 percent), lawyer Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel II (26.1 percent), resigned Cyphil Media Head Jose Ede Marcos (24.9 percent), former President Joseph Estrada (22.1 percent), and Former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile (22.1 percent), and Former Senators Sergio Osmeña III (22.1 percent) and Nene Pimentel (20.8 percent). — Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Erap can make or break a candidate, LP concedes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

THE LIBERAL PARTY YESTERDAY said that deposed President and convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada would "make or break" a candidate in the 2007 elections.

"It's undeniable that President Estrada's showing in the surveys shows that he has substantial support among the people," Quezon Rep. Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada said in a text message.

If Estrada decides not to pursue his bid for the presidency, his standing in the surveys and substantial number of supporters could make a difference for the other aspirants, Tañada said.

"Which his participation in the next local bets not endorsing anyone, it makes the presidential race close," he said.

Tañada believes that the field of presidential choices would narrow to the size of Aquino and Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. if the Supreme Court reinstates the election protest case filed by Estrada against Arroyo in 2004.

He noted that four or five, including Estrada, were from the opposition.

According to Tañada, with the narrowing down in the number of candidates in the survey, "obviously the minds of the electorate are set from about their choices."

"What is clear is the top five are in play for the 2010 elections. The January to February survey will be an indication if we will have a close election and who may be the possible winner. But preferences can still change in election day even," said Tañada.

Meanwhile, apparently buoyed by the latest Pulse Asia survey showing him topping the senatorial race if elections were held today, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada told reporters yesterday that he was considering running for Vice President in 2010. (See related story on this page.)

"I still have three months to think about it ... Everything is still fluid," he said.

But he said he would run for Vice President only if his father would not decide to run.

"But I think I can run for Senate. Estrada talaga sa [Estrada-Arroyo team-up with Sen. Jinky Madrigal, who has declared her plans to run for President.

"That's highly impossible and highly improbable," Jinggoy said of the two possible tandems.

According to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Jinggoy could even run for President if his father is disqualified.

The senator cited a provision in the Election Code that in case a candidate withdraws, or dies, or is disqualified, his party may submit the name of another candidate, even if the deadline for filing the certificate of candidacy has already expired.

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No. [illegible], s 2006

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SUBJECT: Clarification on the Reimbursement of Professional Fees for Anesthesia Service

In order to facilitate the payment of professional fees for anesthesia services given for patients by the following cases:

1. [illegible]
2. Professional fee for local anesthesia when given through local infiltration, block, spinal or epidural or anesthesia not compensable. Amounts shall be the usual, customary and reasonable (UCR) fee as may be reimbursed under drugs and medicines category of existing guidelines.
3. Monitored anesthesia care (MAC) is a type of intravenous service provided by an anesthesiologist where the patient undergoes a procedure under local anesthesia and he or she/she is not under general anesthesia. The patient is maintained by an anesthesiologist or [illegible] under and wears the patient's vital signs, airway, cardiovascular stability, pain control, ensure the level of sedation, or comfort to patient undergoing the procedure.
4. MAC includes all aspects of anesthesia service appropriate risk assessment and post-anesthetic evaluation management.
   a. Professional fee for MAC may be reimbursed to Philhealth member who has complied with the following:
      i. MAC is performed in accredited performance of the following procedures covered by Philhealth cases in case-rate/package rate; and
      ii. The patient's clinical condition must warrant performance of MAC:
         (1) Patient of extreme age under 1 year and over 70
         (2) Cognitive impairment (e.g., mental retardation, autism, dementia)
         (3) Psychological impairment (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, [illegible] severe anxiety disorders)
         (4) Chronic anxiety disorders
         (5) Patients with systemic diseases (e.g., CAD, COPD, emphysema, end-stage renal disease, diabetes, hypertension)
         (6) Critically ill patients
   b. Professional fee for MAC, for diagnostic procedures and cancers only to whom under under (e.g., CT scan, MRI) shall not be reimbursed.
   c. MAC for minor surgical procedures (e.g., [illegible] [illegible] cataract surgery) shall not be reimbursed.
5. Claims for reimbursement for the MAC and anesthesia services are required to submit a [illegible] to the Philhealth Accredited Hospital attended to Philhealth Claim Forms and Operation Technique.

This Circular shall take effect for all cases with submission dates starting September 1, 2006.

This supersedes all previous Circulars, Office Orders and other related issuances that are not inconsistent with any provisions of this Circular issued to effect.

Please be guided accordingly.

DR. REY D. GUERRA
Executive Vice President & COO

Date Signed: July 26, 2006

Nothing wrong with ₱1.6-M gift—Bayani

By Christine O. Avendaño

HE WOULD DO IT AGAIN.

Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday admitted during a Senate inquiry that he accepted P1.6 million five years ago from gifts. Funds executive committee members of the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF), adding he would do the same thing if offered to him in the future.

"Supagkat wala akong maitatong kasalanan." (I don't see any wrong in that.) Fernando told the joint hearing of the Senate blue ribbon and public information and mass media committees which looked into the alleged mismanagement of funds of the MMFF, of which Fernando is also its chair.

But Senate President Pro Tempore Ruppir Estrada, who earlier delivered a privilege speech questioning the gifts, said accepting the cash was "immoral, unconscious and unethical" because MMFF funds were public funds.

A legal opinion sent to the committees by the Justice department said the funds were private.

In his privilege speech, last May, Estrada said Fernando received P1.1 million each in both 2003 and 2004. But during the first hearing of the Senate inquiry last June 5, it was learned that Fernando also received a cash gift of ₱500,000 in 2004, bringing the total amount to ₱1.6 million.

LP-Atienza asks SC to stop Mar

By Norman Bordadora

[illegible] yesterday filed petitions before the Supreme Court to stop Sen. Manuel Roxas II and his appointees from [illegible] party powers.

The so-called Atienza Wing of the LP also asked the high tribunal to nullify the Commission on Elections resolution on June 19 upholding Roxas' election as party president.

Through lawyers Hydra C. Aleyan and Luis Asuncion, the Atienza group questioned the validity of Roxas' election by the LP's national executive council on Nov. 28, 2005. They charged that the party's national council at that time was [illegible] by elected officials "consecrated" expulsion and was packed by then party president Franklin Drilon's "loyalists."

There was no quorum that day and therefore the election of Roxas as party president was "void and of no effect," the Atienza group charged.

The former group said a temporary restraining order (TRO) was necessary since there are "actions and threats of retaliation in the party constituent "violations of the rights of the party and its members."

Atienza's group also denounced Roxas' "dictatorial handling" of the party's affairs which it claims led to the resignation of Sen. Francis Pangilinan from the LP.

Atienza's group posted [illegible] with the Ombudsman to [illegible] Drilon and his pro-administration allies.

Heading in the petition, former Senate President Franklin Drilon dismissed it as "pathetic and legally feeble."

Palace confident of SC vindication in choice of Nat'l Artists

MALACAÑANG SAID TESTERday it was confident the Supreme Court would sustain President Macapagal-Arroyo's power to pick National Artists, and would stand by this year's choices unless ordered otherwise.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, reacting to a Supreme Court order to hear a petition to stop the proclamation of this year's National Artists, said yesterday the President's authority to make the final choices for National Artists was spelled out clearly in the law and various executive orders.

"We believe that the President's authority in the matter mentioned by law to be the one to make the final choice, would be maintained by the Supreme Court. But of course we are not dictating upon the Supreme Court, but I'm very sure that the fundamentals of the existing laws will come up," he said in a press briefing.

Ermita cited RA 7356, which created the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and EO 236, known as the Revised Code of the Philippines (2000), which states that the Order of National Artists is conferred on a Filipino "upon the recommendation" of the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the NCCA.

PJ Benjamin

GMA submits most expensive nat'l budget yet

By Christine V. Esguerra

IT COULD BE HER MOST EXPENSIVE proposed national budget, and President Macapagal-Arroyo saved it for last.

Misbehaving yesterday treasured in the House of Representatives the 2010 national expenditure program amounting to a whopping P1.541 trillion, the final budget to be submitted by the President before she steps down from office in 2010, ending a nine-year term.

The amount is P115 billion or 8 percent higher than the existing P1.426 trillion national budget.

In a statement, Mr. Arroyo said her 2010 budget would allow "future generations to build on what their administration is striving to bequeath."

"This is one that will see the fruition of what this government had started eight and a half years ago—reform for economy, invest in agriculture, put food on every table, create jobs, and make education accessible to all," she added.

Like previous budgets, the government still signals its readiness with debt payments, first get automatic appropriations in the national budget.

In the proposed budget, the Palace set aside P548.6 billion for debt service. Of the amount, P221.3 billion will go to domestic obligations, while P119.5 billion will be used to pay foreign creditors.

Fiscal consolidation

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, however, noted that the ratio of national debt to the gross domestic product (GDP) had gone down to 56.1 percent in 2008 from a high of 78.9 percent in 2004.

Andaya said the proposed budget would provide the next administration with "the tools to sustain fiscal consolidation."

Andaya pegged the budget deficit at P320.4 billion, but noted that the amount was still "manageable" at 2.8 percent of the GDP.

The Department of Education received the highest allocation with P172.8 billion, followed by the Department of Public Works and Highways with P105.2 billion, and the Department of Interior and Local Government with P63.4 billion.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development landed at number 8 to the list of 23 agencies with the highest budget allocation, owing primarily to the P10 billion budget for the conditional cash transfer for poor families.

LPG price to rise

By Amy R. Remo

THE PRICE OF COOKING GAS WILL RISE by P4 a kilogram on Monday next week due to the expected increase in the international contract price of liquefied petroleum gas next month.

This will raise the price of an 11-kg LPG cylinder refuel is used by most households by P44.

LPG Marketers Association (LPGMA) president Arnel Ty explained that the latest increase was due to an estimated $77-per-metric-ton (MT) increase in the international contract price in September.

For August, the international contract price of LPG stood at $511 per MT.

Ty said that at the retail level, the increase was actually equivalent to a P4.20-per-kg price hike, which would translate to an increase of P46.20 per cylinder. However, LPGMA members decided to round it off to only P4 per kg.

Mario Roxas, 86

FORMER JOURNALIST MARIO ROXAS Pastor died on Tuesday at the age of 86.

Pastor was news editor and sportswriter of the Associated Press for almost three decades until he joined the Quezon Praya and Sons in the early '70s as a PR executive.

He was a former member of the National Press Club (NPC) and the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA).

The deceased is survived by wife Florentina Henry; Ann, Jojo and daughter Willa Jane Marilou, Elvis and Abi, and grandchildren Ina Rica, Trey, Klaya and Bekka.

His remains lie at Loyola Memorial Chapels in Sucat, Parañaque.

Cremation will be on Saturday, Aug. 29, after the 1 p.m. requiem Mass.

10th National Convention & General Assembly of Safety Practitioners & Advocates

August 27-28, 2009, Apo View Hotel, Davao City

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MESSAGE

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Court grants Fil-Am's bid for writ of amparo

By Herman Berdadera

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS GRANTED the petition of Filipino-American activist Melissa Roxas for a writ of amparo and ordered Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro and top military officials to protect her and her family from any form of harassment.

The appellate court also ordered Teodoro, retired Forced Chief of Staff Gen. Victor Ibrahim, Army Commanding General Delfin Bangit and other respondents to continue their investigation into human rights violations.

The court also granted her petition for a writ of habeas data and ordered the respondents to refrain from distributing or causing the distribution of any record in whatever form relative to Roxas' alleged ties to the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

The human rights group Karapatan provided the Inquirer with a copy of the 32-page decision penned by Associate Justice Noel Tijam and concurred in by Associate Justices Isaias Dicdican and Normandie Pizarro.

The appellate court, however, denied Roxas' petition for an inspection of the military facility in where she was allegedly held and for the production of her personal belongings.

Roxas was abducted on May 19, 2009, and allegedly brought to a military camp where she was allegedly tortured.

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SM DEPARTMENT STORE

Salonga urges solons to impeach Ombudsman

From page A1

and culpable violation of the Constitution, the complainants cited her inaction on the P1.3-billion Mega Pacific case, the P728-million fertilizer fund scam, the "hello-garci" controversy and the World Bank-requested corruption in road projects.

They also accused her of filing defensive cases against Senator Aurelio Sotto, Commodore Dave and of shunning him in discussing said irregularities. She is Gov. Bell Tapia and Bataan Gov. Enrique Garcia.

Gutierrez's defenders are scheduled to speak on Days 2 Rep. Mishai Defensor, chair of the committee that will decide whether the complaint is sufficient in form and substance, said voting on the complaint could take be suspended on that day.

If one-third vote, or 58 of the House membership, is needed to approve the complaint and bring it to the Senate for trial.

Inutile and prostituted

"In no other time in history have we seen the Office of the Ombudsman so inutile and so prostituted to serve the ends of the morally bankrupt and corrupt Arroyo government," said Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo.

Ocampo said it seemed that Gutierrez was appointed not to go after erring public servants but to ignore the government officials' greed in raiding the public coffers.

He insisted that the failure to punish culprits endangers the people's right to hold accountable those who betray the people's trust. "The situation has been ripe for the commission of offenses against the people," he added.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teri Colmenares, meanwhile, said the new crimes are impeachable, and the Ombudsman had abdicated her duty to take the officials to task.

Colmenares said it would be dangerous if public officials would commit offenses, knowing they would not be held accountable for it.

Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros, who spoke on the Commission on Elections' anomalous Mega Pacific deal for the purchase of automated counting machines, said Gutierrez disregarded the Supreme Court's findings of irregularities by absolving officials involved of any criminal or administrative liability.

SALONGA: 89-year-old statesman leads impeachment complaint.

GUTIERREZ: Accused of betrayal of public trust and violations of the Constitution

"It similarly insults the faith and trust which the public has reposed in her office," she said.

Textbook case ignored

Akbayan Rep. Walden Bello said Gutierrez could have resolved promptly the case of the ghost general caught with undeclared 100,000 euros since this was a "textbook case."

Gutierrez could also have acted on the World Bank's findings on irregularities in the bidding for road projects, but she essentially let go the dates that were made known to her, said Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño. The matter is still at the preliminary investigation stage, he added.

Quezon Rep. Erin Tañada and Bukidnon Rep. Teofisto Guingona said Gutierrez's orders against Tapia and Garcia, which apparently lacked basis in fact, showed her arbitrariness and partisanship, and violated the government's right to due process.

Gutierrez also filed defensive cases against Perez, who was accused of extortion, and then was incompetent to investigate negligence, said Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza.

Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano also lamented that many parties, including his group, had filed cases in the Office of the Ombudsman regarding the fertilizer fund scam, and yet none of these had progressed.

She will be vindicated

Assistant Ombudsman Mark Jalandoni said the functions that Gutierrez was busy focusing on "are jobs ..."

"It's not the docket of the prosecutors but the strength of the evidence that matters. In the end, we believe that Ombudsman Gutierrez will be vindicated," Jalandoni said.

He said the cases being studied by the Ombudsman's office were stacked carefully by the Ombudsman. "These cases are judicial matters and we have to follow the legal process," he said.

Jalandoni noted that in the 2009 SALN scandal, the Ombudsman constituted a preliminary investigation committee, and results were now being reviewed. He said that Gutierrez withdrew herself from that case "to dispel any decision-almost her integrity."

The 1986-87 scandal involved Pres. Corazon Aquino's late brother-in-law, who was a chairman of the Commission on Elections. With a report from Philip C. Tubeza

Lakas-Kampi downplays survey results

From page A1

as standard-bearer for the May 2010 presidential election would not bode well in the coming months.

"You know surveys are surveys. We're not believing it. It helps to guide, but it's not all," he told reporters at a briefing.

Machinery

Benitez, who is the coalition president, agreed with Albay Gov. Joey Salceda's observation that the party-machinery would be a key factor in shoring up its standard-bearer's popularity.

"Does the party choose somebody and places the machinery of the party behind him, you will see how these things will sometimes push [our candidate]," he said.

At the same briefing, Salceda said the administration's "policy power and people" would be par or good use in the election.

"All I'm trying to say is if you have clear-cut policies, I think it's up to the candidate to come out with a good recipe," he said.

The coalition is considering De Castro, Teodoro or Fernando as standard-bearer, and is expected to put all its resources behind its choice to the face of the threat of rule against President Macapagal-Arroyo after she steps down in June 2010.

De Castro rivals

The president is, De Castro, who has the highest rating of 40 percent in regard to the administration's former candidates, has yet to declare that he's running for president and will run his ticket with the administration coalition.

Prospero Pichay party vice president for membership, said the Lakas-Kampi CMD alliance say had the support of "70 percent" of governors, congressmen and mayors across the country.

"With the machinery backing De Castro, he can catch up with the leaders," the former Surigao del Sur lawmaker said in a phone interview. "David still have a fighting chance."

Pichay claimed that in the run-up to the 2004 presidential election, Mr. Arroyo initially trailed then opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. but eventually rocketed him after local candidates started campaigning for her.

TV ads

Pichay said it wasn't surprising that De Castro was overtaken by other aspirants since he had not come out with his own TV or print ads.

He also attributed the poor showing of Teodoro and Fernando in surveys to their insignificant number of TV ads, compared with the other aspirants.

Gordon said there was still ample time between now and May 2010 for the coalition's standard-bearer to catch up with the rest of the survey leaders.

He said the coalition would convene some its national executive committee in the coming weeks to announce the mode of selection of the standard-bearer.

It is still "anybody's guess," Pichay said.

Adiaci what the party would do if De Castro decided against running for president, or if he runs, decided against joining the administration, Pichay said: "We'll look for other winning candidates."

In Manila City, Southern Leyte Rep. Roger Mercado expressed confidence that the administration party's candidates would fare well in the surveys once the Commission on Elections unveils the campaign period by October.

Villar, Roxas to beat

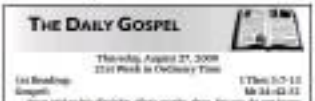
Former Senate President Jovito Salonga, however, reckoned the presidential derby would come down to a battle between the Nacionalista Party's Villar and the Liberal Party's Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, with the latter emerging as the winner.

PROMISE Standard-bearers of the Lakas-Kampi-CMD ruling coalition—Vice President Noli de Castro, HNDA Chair Bayan Fernando and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro—are faring poorly in latest opinion surveys.

Salonga said there was still time for Villar to overtake Roxas, whom he described as "inexperienced."

"Villar is the ultimate analysis, those who would dig it out—this would be subject to possible qualifications—would be Manny Villar and Mar Roxas," he said. With a report from Jose Armando Bagatsing Magsaysay

Is RP politics ready for a John Adams?



THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, August 27, 2009
21st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Thes 3:7-13
Gospel: Mt 24:42-51

Jesus said to his disciples, "Stay awake, then, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Just think about this: if the master of the house knew that the thief would come by night around a certain hour, he would stay awake to prevent his house to be broken into. So be alert, for the hour I like will come at the hour you least expect.

"Imagine a capable servant whom his master has put in charge of his household to give them food at the proper time. Fortunate indeed is that servant whom his master will find at work when he comes. Truly, I say to you, his food will become that one with everything he has.

"But so with that bad servant who thinks: My master is delayed. And he begins ill-treating his fellow servants while eating and drinking with drunkards: the his master will come on the day he does not know and at the hour he least expects. He will dismember him and assign him a share with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Commentary:

In words for Christ's coming, is to reminisce that frame of mind, in which we would be hoping that He would find us. We cannot know how much time we have to live, much less can we know the time fixed for the last judgment. Christ's coming will be happy for those of us, who can stand ready for Him. But the other one would for those of us, who are lukewarm in our faith, will have hell for their portion in the other life. May Christ, when He comes, pronounce us blessed and present us to God, fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in heaven.

We must not become numb to this. We must not become numb to the deeds of those who die as a consequence of poverty, the through lack of food or health care or shelter, for lack of hope or possibility to see any future. Our conscience is aroused. "How can I give way up?" God cries, knowing the consequences of so continuing on as we are. Our Christian traditions does not soften the reality of crucifixion. What it does affirm is that destruction, loss, and crucifixion do not have the last word. That belongs to God.

Adoration Ministries and Foundation, Inc. of Bishop Julius Labayen, D.D. (Diocese of San Jose de Antipolo) 2009 Box 1001, Antipolo City 1870 Philippines Tel. (632) 651-6743 Fax (632) 651-6743 Email: info@adoration.org Website: http://www.adoration.org/ Adoration Ministries and Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization duly registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Reg. No. A1998-01787. Authorized Officers: Daniel S. Ang-ay, Jr., Pres.; Estelito Mendoza, Treasurer. Tel. 632-8174-0000 Email: treasurer@adoration.org.ph Accounts Department: ang@gmail.com

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ended in a discussion of the fearbecoming Philippine presidential race.

John Adams was famous for speaking his mind which, according to history books, often were against popular opinion.

"He was a delight lawyer with a prickly personality," noted Sharon Hackley, cultural affairs attaché, "more remarkable as a political philosopher than as a politician."

"Can we put in the context of today's situation... a political figure like John Adams?" US Ambassador Kristie Kenney asked at the start of the open forum that followed the screening.

Kenney had formally welcomed the audience to the Chancery building of the embassy and introduced the film, instead of leaving after that, initially planned, she finished the film showing, seated above in the front row next to her fans.

The question sparked a lively exchange between the hosts and their guests, less than a hundred and mostly student leaders and young filmmakers.

Adams was short, bald and irritable, barely power-hungry, unlike the multi-awarded, movie-star actor (promising in Adams' Days 7) portrays him through the actor Paul Giamatti as a fiery, almost frightening, orator. He was "very much against George Washington," Bachley said, who was 6'3" and "charismatic."

An Adams type in RP?

The guests, some of them first-time voters, raised some concerns, because of which was: Does Philippine politics have room for an Adams type, or is one of ramshackle qualified to perform through packing real marketing?

And what if one such type runs up for next year's presidential race but no one listens because he's a ghost? What if Mercy Aquino sees it, and we don't get another one?

Then this one, almost a plea: Who can help us crush through everything good that is written about all the conditions, to get at the truth?

As many answers came from the other guests as there a panel of three legal eagles who said Adams had always been a historic figure, and lawyer Adel Tamano to mentor. Tamano was invited by the Cultural Affairs Office as an educator (chair of the Postmasters ng Langsad ng Maynila" and a "big John Adams fan."

"You will not find the perfect person," Tamano said, "because he doesn't exist. I've worked in government, I know. People are flawed. John Adams was extremely flawed."

He said the voter's goal should be to find the candidate who has the best intentions and the best track record, stands by his promises, and is equipped to deliver them.

"I admire John Adams most of all because he was a man of integrity. He said what needed to be said, and never went back on his word," Tamano said.

LIS PRESIDENT John Adams acting wife Abigail, as portrayed by Paul Giamatti and Laura Linney in the HBO film

Know what's offered

One guest said every single person who wanted his vote in 2010 should be "acutely aware" of issues and able to discern (watch from falsehood). "It is the politician's job to market himself; the voter's to know exactly what is being offered."

Bachley added, "If you do not find a living example in your midst, you can be your own John Adams. What he did here was to speak out and stand by his principles."

But the young audience was also reminded to put the critical eye to context. Read up, be in the know, double-check information about candidates, Tamano told them.

"It doesn't matter you have or vote only for the right ones," the lawyer joked.

Bong Pineda, HNO Asia representative in the Philippines, said the screening was approved after consultations with the Cultural Affairs Office and the Thomas Jefferson Information Center.

It was the embassy's suggestion to include a small forum, "on the film's relevance to Philippine society today." The list of guests—from the University of the Philippines, University of the Rose, the Ramon Magsaysay Award, Quezon University and Dominicans og Langsad ng Maynila—came from the Cultural Affairs Office.

"John Adams" won 13 Emmy (US television industry) awards and four Golden Globes (from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association) in 2008. It premiere in Manila on Sept. 7, 10 p.m. on HBO Signature and 11 p.m. on HBO.

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Erap ordered killing, Mancao tells court

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cops—and Lacson have denied involvement in the Dacer-Corbito murders.

"Colonel Mancao testified about Operation Delta and that it was specifically designed to 'neutralize' Bobby Dacer. He said Lacson orchestrated the operation," Topacio told reporters after the SL-minute hearing.

Journalists were barred from getting close to the courtroom.

'Bigote'

According to Topacio, Mancao only admitted that Estrada used the code name "Bigote" (Mustache) in issuing orders to the men dubbed Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), which Lacson once headed and of which Mancao was a ranking officer.

But Mancao said he had never talked to Estrada directly regarding the plan to kill Dacer.

"He said it was General Lacson who relayed to them Malacañang's direct order. He said [former Senior Supt.] Michael Ray Aquino also got direct orders from Estrada to kill Dacer," Topacio said.

The lawyer said that in his testimony, Mancao identified Aquino as PAOCTF chief who Lacson appointed to support his claim that he knew about the confidential operations of the special police unit.

"As Lacson operations chief of PAOCTF, he had access to sensitive information. He may have been involved in the surveillance in the region, including the killing of Mr. Dacer," Topacio said.

Asked if Mancao detailed the plan to get rid of Dacer, Topacio said the trial concentrated more on his client's frontmen as a key PAOCTF official.

"The next hearing on Sept. 2 would be the day of reckoning for Colonel Mancao," he said.

But on the phone with the Inquirer, Senator Lacson said: "I was told by the lawyer who attended as [an] observer at the hearing that Mancao never mentioned these things.

"He modified only on the organizational structure of the PAOCTF for she mentioned Dylan Sobra but he never mentioned my name.

"Whoever gave that statement is giving a spin to the story. This can be easily verified from the court transcript of Mancao's testimony."

Lacson later added in a text message: "For the nth time, I deny having anything to do with the Dacer-Corbito case. Is that what Topacio wanted his client to state in his testimony? He should know how to honor a lawyer's code of ethics and not resort to disinformation to deceive the public."

Glen Dumbo

Although they were both summoned to Judge Fernandez's courtroom yesterday, Mancao did not have the chance to talk with his former colleague, ex-Supt. Glen Dumbo.

Explained Topacio: "Dumbo was actually ordered by the judge to leave because the court prohibits a witness to hear the testimony of a fellow witness."

Dumbo arrived at Manila City Hall at around 2 p.m., a few minutes ahead of his former superior.

Mancao and Dumbo, each of whom refused interviews with the media, were escorted by at least 30 heavily armed agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) formally asked the court to drop the name of Dumbo as accused in the double-murder case, fueling speculation that it was part of a negotiation for him to testify against Estrada and Lacson.

The DOJ also asked the court to allow the prosecution to present additional evidence, such as Dumbo's testimony.

'Honest mistake'

State Prosecutor Hazel Valdez said the DOJ's omnibus motion was meant to "rectify an inadvertent mistake in the wording and interpretation of the decision of the Supreme Court."

She was referring to the Oct. 5, 2005, ruling of the high court ordering Dumbo's reinstatement as a respondent in the case.

"[A]fter a careful and thorough revealing of the Supreme Court decision as well as the [Ombudsman's] resolution, it clearly appears that the inclusion of Dumbo as respondent in the double-murder case, having speculation that it was part of a negotiation for him to testify against Estrada and Lacson.

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"[A]fter a careful and thorough revealing of the Supreme Court decision as well as the

Sen. Ted Kennedy dies at age 77

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father figure and, memorably, eulogist of an Irish-American clan plagued again and again by tragedy.

Kennedy's death triggered an outpouring of reminiscences from Democrats and Republicans as well as foreign leaders.

'Greatest US senator'

"An important chapter in our history has come to an end. Our country has lost a great leader, who picked up the torch of his fallen brothers and became the greatest United States senator of our time," President Obama said in a written statement.

"For five decades, virtually every major piece of legislation to advance the civil rights, health and economic well being of the American people bore his name and resulted from his efforts," said Obama, who is vacationing in Martha's Vineyard off the Massachusetts coast.

Kennedy's family announced his death in a brief statement released early Wednesday.

"We have lost a loving husband, father and grandfather. The center of our family and joyous fight in our lives, but the inspiration of his faith, optimism, and perseverance will live on in our hearts forever," the statement said.

There was no immediate word on funeral arrangements. Two of Kennedy's brothers, John and Robert, are buried at Arlington National Cemetery across the Potomac River from Washington.

Senator Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada issued a statement that said: "It was the privilege of my lifetime to work with Ted Kennedy ... The liberal lion's mighty roar may now fall silent, but his dream shall never die."

Kennedy was elected to the Senate in 1962, taking the seat that his brother John had occupied before winning the White House, and served longer than all but nine senators in history.

His own hopes of reaching the White House were dashed—perhaps doomed—in 1969 by the scandal that came to be known as Chappaquiddick, an auto accident that left a young woman dead.

He struggled for the White House more than a decade later, but the Democratic nomination in Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Kennedy not only ended his presidential ambitions but ushered in a stirring valedictory that softened scars of the decades: "For all those whose cause has been lost but not forgotten, for all those whose dreams were unfulfilled, for the world quiet on the cruise ahead, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die."

String of tragedies

Kennedy was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor in May 2008. He underwent surgery and a grueling regimen of radiation and chemotherapy.

In a recent interview, Kennedy's son, Rhode Island Democratic Rep. Patrick Kennedy, said his father had defied the predictions of doctors by surviving more than a year with his fight against cancer.

The younger Kennedy said that gave family members a surprise blessing, as they were able to spend more time with the senator and to tell him how much he had meant to their lives.

Kennedy arrived at his place in the Senate after a string of family tragedies. He was the only one of the four Kennedy brothers to die of natural causes.

Kennedy's eldest brother, Joseph, was killed in a plane crash during World War II. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in 1963. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy was gunned down in Los Angeles as he campaigned for the 1968 Democratic presidential nomination.

Years later, in 1969, John F. Kennedy Jr. was killed in a plane crash at age 38 along with his wife.

It fell to Ted Kennedy to deliver the eulogies, to comfort his brothers' widows, to mentor his three nieces and nephews. It was Ted Kennedy who walked JFK's daughter, Caroline, down the aisle at her wedding.

Eloquent speaker

Tragedy had a way of bringing out his eloquence.

Kennedy sketched a dream of a better future as he laid to rest his brother Robert in 1968: "My brother need not be idealized, or enlarged in death beyond what he was in life; to be remembered simply as a good and decent man, who saw wrong and tried to right it, saw suffering and tried to heal it, saw war and tried to stop it."

After John Jr.'s death, the senator said: "We dared to think, in that other 1960s phrase, that this nation bravely would live to youth-gray hair, with his beloved Carolyn by his side. But like his father, he had every gift but length of years."

His own legacy was blighted on the night of July 18, 1969, when Kennedy drove his car off a bridge on Chappaquiddick Island, on Martha's Vineyard. Mary Jo Kopechne, a 28-year-old worker with JFK's campaigns, was found dead in the submerged car's back seat 10 hours later.

Kennedy, then 37, pleaded guilty to leaving the scene of an accident and received a two-month suspended sentence and a year's probation.

At the height of the scandal, Kennedy went on national television to explain himself in an extraordinary 13-minute address in which he said he was having struck and rejected rumors of "immoral conduct" with Kopechne.

'Irrational thoughts'

He said he was haunted by "irrational" thoughts immediately after the accident, and wondered "whether some awful curse did actually hang over all the Kennedys." He said his failure to report the accident right away was "indefensible."

After Chappaquiddick, Kennedy gained a reputation as a heavy drinker and a womanizer, a tragically flawed figure. Incensed by the bum deal he did his constituents, he would go on to build one of the most effective—and hardworking lawmakers Washington has ever seen.

A liberal-channel figure with a tarnish of white hair, a booming voice and a thick, widely imitated Boston accent, he coupled his gaudy flaws with formidable negotiating skills.

He was both a passionate liberal and a close-eyed pragmatist, willing to reach across the aisle to get things done.

At 46, he seemed liberated from the recurring expectations and high hopes invested in him after the death of his brothers, and he plunged into his work in the Senate.

On top of his legislative achievements, he was also a driving force for peace in Ireland and a prominent critic of the war in Iraq.

Kennedy and his sister Caroline shook up the Democratic establishment in January 2008 when they endorsed Obama over Hillary Rodham Clinton for the nomination for president.

After Obama won, Kennedy received words once spoken by his brother John, declaring: "The word is changing. The old ways will not do ... It is time for a new generation of leadership."

Youngest in brood of 9

Born in 1932, the youngest of Joseph and Rose Kennedy's nine children, Edward Moore Kennedy was part of a family bristling with political ambition, beginning with maternal grandfather John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, a congressman and mayor of Boston.

Round-cheeked Teddy was thrown out of Harvard in 1951, for cheating. He arranged for a classmate to take a freshman Spanish exam for him. He eventually returned, earning his degree in 1956. He went on to law school at the University of Virginia.

Devastated by his brothers' assassinations and injured in a 1964 plane crash that left him with back pain that would plague him for decades, Kennedy temporarily withdrew from public life in 1968.

But he reemerged in 1969 as he elected majority whip of the Senate. Then came Chappaquiddick.

Still, Kennedy hardly won reelection in 1970, but he lost his leadership job. He remained in the Senate, opposing the war in Vietnam War and support of social programs but toyed not a 1976 presidential bid.

In 1979, he decided to run for the White House but bowed out of the race after getting roundly beaten by Carter in the primaries. Later, when asked to assess the campaign, he replied: "Well, I learned to lose, and he is Kennedy that's hard."

Personal life

Kennedy married Virginia Joan Bennett, known as Joan, in 1958. They divorced in 1982.

In 1992, he married Washington lawyer Victoria Reggie. His survivors include a daughter, Kara Kennedy Allen; two sons, Edward Jr. and Patrick, a congressman from Rhode Island; and two stepchildren, Caroline and Curran Raclin.

In 1991, Kennedy rescued his nephew William Kennedy Smith and his son Patrick from bad on go out for drinks while staying at the family's estate at Palm Beach, Florida. Later that night, a woman whom Smith met at a bar accused him of raping her at the house.

Smith was acquitted, but the senator's carousing—and testimony about him stumbling about the house in his skivvies and no pants—further damaged his reputation.

Kennedy offered a mea culpa in a speech at Harvard, saying, "my own shortcomings, the limits in the candor of my private life."

Later on, his second wife appeared to have a calming influence on him, helping him rehabilitate his image.

Marked by illness

Kennedy's family life has been marked by illness.

Edward Jr. had a leg to bone cancer in 1973 at age 12. Kara had a cancerous tumor removed from her lung in 2002. In 1986, Patrick had a successful battle with cocaine and his spine corrected. He has also struggled with depression and addiction and announced in June that he was re-entering rehab.

Kennedy's memoir, "True Compass," is set to be published in the fall. Reports from AP and AFP

US immigrants fight to bring in adult kids

From page A1

The mother moved to northern California with her husband and two younger children, and filed a new round of paperwork to get the rest of the family to join them in the country without another decade of waiting.

"I have a job; with my son...am I still alive when you come here?" said Xiomi, 38, a supermarket clerk who lives in Livermore. "I am always praying somebody can help us in the government so we can bring my little boy."

Immigration lawyers say thousands of immigrants are stuck in a similar situation. In countries such as the Philippines, Mexico and China, who owe of US citizens and legal permanent residents a decade or two for a family-sponsored green card because of country-based immigration quotas.

Sanzo is one of several immigrants suing the federal government to try to get their adult children into the country without waiting the lengthy wait.

Under US immigration law, children 21 years old and older cannot immigrate under their parents' applications for green cards.

Like double jeopardy

Immigration attorneys say a 2002 law known as the "child status protection act" was supposed to lengthy processing means those grown-children should be allowed into the country soon after their parents file new paperwork on their behalf.

But the government argues that many of those who got too old during the wait are not new applicants and must start from the beginning.

"They want them to go from the front of the line, where they almost made it, and go to the back of mine, often for the same reason,"

AFP tells whistle-blower: Prove claims in court

By Tarra Quismundo

IF NEITHER SIBUYAN NOR NANCY Gadlos failed to prove her previous allegations, what more this time?

This was what Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said yesterday in challenging Gadlos to prove in court her claims that the US military were engaged in combat in Mindanao and that it had built facilities meant for prolonged stay on Philippine soil.

"She will have to prove her allegations in the proper court. She cannot cast aside allegations of misuse of funds before, and if I can tell our that she can't prove that. She's now trying to come up with other allegations, so she has to prove that in court, at the proper venue," Brawner said on the phone.

According to Brawner, Gadlos was unable to prove the accusations she made in May that top officials of her former unit had pocketed P40 million of a P84-million budget for the RP-US Balikatan military exercises.

Now dropped from the Navy rolls, Gadlos is a former civil military operations head of the Sibuyan Mindoro Command.

"Perhaps, for the public to gauge her credibility, let's go back to her earlier allegations. Until now, she can't prove that. What does that say about her credibility?" Brawner said.

He said Gadlos "doesn't know the background of how [the US military presence] came about."

Brawner said the AFP had strictly enforced the policy of disallowing US troops from combat operations. He said American help was limited to technical assistance and development projects.

He also denied that the US military had constructed permanent facilities in Philippine camps in Mindanao. "These are just temporary facilities for billeting, mess facilities ... Most of the structures are container vans that have air-conditioners."

Brawner could not say for certain whether Filipino troops were barred from the US facilities. But he described the Americans encouragement to Joloano "open and without any issues."

US troops' combat role in RP revealed

From page A1

affidavit would be submitted to the Senate today. Gadlos has expressed willingness to testify at the joint congressional hearing on the continued stay of American troops in the country.

"The US [soldiers] who are deployed in Mindanao are part of the Special Operations Command. This is a unit of highly capable and technically-skilled individuals. They will not be deployed here if they are not combat-ready," Gadlos said.

She admitted that she had no personal knowledge on the US soldiers purported involvement in actual hostilities, but said in her affidavit that Filipino soldiers had confirmed to her "that US troops are embedded in Philippine troops who are engaged to armed combat in Mindanao."

She also said in her affidavit that she had attended "a couple of classified briefings" where members of the US Special Operations Command gave the Philippine military "intelligence reports on the location of the Abu Sayyaf and terrorist groups in Mindanao."

Asked to comment, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. said Gadlos would have to prove her claims in the "proper court." (See story on this page.)

At press time, the US Embassy had yet to respond to a text message seeking comment, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement had yet to issue a statement.

Violation of Constitution

At the press conference, Gadlos said she feared the US military had taken part in the planning of Philippine combat operations.

Aided by their "highly sophisticated equipment, they give information to the AFP counterpart," she said.

"They have special intelligence capability and in many instances what I was in the briefings in the conference room, the US counterpart would say where ... the terrorists are, either Abu Sayyaf or Muslim secessionist," Gadlos said.

"In [the Balikatan] 2002-1, the focus was on the Abu Sayyaf, and we knew that they had a role in the actual operations of hindering personalities of this group," she said.

Urban said the participation of US troops in combat planning or their providing intelligence information was a violation of the 1987 Constitution.

"The constitutional [provision] is unequivocal and unambiguous ... and our Constitution prohibits the presence of US troops. What Mr. Gadlos is saying is, for the past seven years their presence in the Philippines has been permanent and continuous," the lawyer said.

She added, "The intelligence [operations], how do they justify that? That is part of the prohibition. They are allowed to use intelligence equipment all over, otherwise they won't. How do you justify that legally?"

US structures

The US military has also built permanent and temporary structures in several AFP camps in Mindanao, Gadlos said.

These structures are either "off limits" to AFP personnel, and Filipino soldiers, including generals and other ranking officials, or are under only upon invitation and are limited to certain areas, she said.

In her affidavit, Gadlos explained that the permanent structures "are those with fixed foundations made of concrete and cannot be easily removed."

"The semi-permanent [ones], the structures had temporary, as well as two permanent structures in Camp Emilio Navarro, the headquarters of the AFP Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) in Zamboanga City.

"The headquarters of the US Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) is also at Camp Navarro.

Said Gadlos in her affidavit: "The American camp in Camp Navarro consists of two permanent structures, built by the Americans located near the office of the Headquarters Service Group of the [Westmincom].

"The two permanent structures are fenced off by barbed wires and guarded by US Marines. Filipinos have access to these two structures only upon the occasions, a few Filipinos -officers are invited inside the bigger structure [but still as a limited access] which has the name of the [JSOTF-P]."

4 AFP camps

Gadlos said the Americans had also built and maintained temporary and permanent structures in De Edwin Andrews Air Base for their personnel and equipment, including radio and communication facilities.

"This area is fenced and secured by Filipinos and Americans based by Dyn Corp., an American private military contractor. Filipinos have no access to this area," she said.

According to Gadlos, the Americans have access to the air base's runway, and their planes come and go almost every other day. These aircraft—C-12, C-130 and Shorts 6—are piloted by the base operations center.

Gadlos named the four AFP camps where the US troops maintain "temporary structures"—Camp Mabalgang in Barangay Mabalgang, Zamboanga City, the training camp of the Philippine Army; the Philippine Naval Station in Isaac Base, Poblacion, Jagolo, Basilan; the Philippine Air Force's Air Base in Lower Calarian in Camp Navarro; and Camp General Bautista in Bautista, Jolo, Sulu.

Wood, GI sheets

In Camp Mabalgang, the interrogation and detention facilities of wood and GI sheets with a container van beside it, Gadlos said.

It occupies 200-300 square meters of land, fenced off and "generally not accessible to Filipinos," her the American base means for the Philippine Army's training facilities, she said.

Gadlos said the first sure the concrete structure, also made of wood and GI sheets, is the Philippine Naval Station in 2004.

Staffed by seven US Navy personnel, the structure occupies some 200 sq m and houses advanced satellite communication equipment, she said. Rubber boats and land vehicles are parked in the vicinity.

Gadlos said the Americans had been operating their structure in the Naval Station in Westmincom since 2002.

In Camp General Bautista, they have temporary structures occupying some 1,000 sq m that house personnel of the US Special Operations Command Pacific "365 days a year," Gadlos said in her affidavit.

"In all, the US troops stationed inside Camp Navarro and other parts of Mindanao total about 500 at each particular time, on a rotating basis of four months each. These troops are stationed in Mindanao even without any Balikatan exercises going on," she said.

At the press conference, Gadlos said she had met mostly AFP junior officers and enlisted personnel but had wondered about the US structures in the Philippines, as well as the US warships (called "frigates") seen within the country's "exclusive economic zone."

She said that on a superior's instructions, some Filipino soldiers were sent brought to a restaurant where they were served bottles of a popular local rum for $2 each to the US troops.

In her affidavit, she explained that frigates were for "war and equipped with missiles," and were utilized in a "war in being" or a show of force.

Free ride

Gadlos lamented at the press conference that Filipino soldiers had gained very little benefits from the RP-US Balikatan exercises.

At most, she said, Filipino soldiers get a "free ride" in state-of-the-art US aircraft.

As for the humanitarian missions, Gadlos said that while it was true that US troops had built school buildings and roads for Filipinos, these were infrastructure that the Philippine government should provide its own citizens.

She pointed out that Filipino women were being lured into prostitution by the continued US presence in Mindanao.

Gadlos also denounced the estrangement with which US troops treated Filipino soldiers like lowcaste.

She recalled an American soldier signaling to her using his fingers instead of calling her by her name. She said she was insulted and told him: "Don't treat me like a dog. This is our country."

Drive on to gather 1M signatures for Noynoy

From page A1

others said they had made up their mind that Noynoy would be a good president.

"We believe this is an event in uniting itself," Reyes said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, the group had collected 2,000 signatures.

Three months to go

Reyes said he and the movement's volunteers would put up the booth every Wednesday, "Business Day," until November, the deadline for the filing of candidacies at the Commission on Elections.

"We have three more months to gather one million signatures. And it's not impossible," he said.

With Reyes in the Noynoy Aquino for President Movement (NAPM) are Ramon Palaro, Salvador Rivera, Archie Marcos and Rodolfo Ocampo. All served as members of the Cory Aquino for President Movement in 1985.

Starting Aug. 21

Reyes said the signature campaign started on Aug. 21, during the Ninoy Aquino Day memorial in Makati City commemorating the 26th death anniversary of Noynoy's father, opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

"When we saw Noynoy, we realized the situation: Noynoy for President," Some people were asking, 'Where can they sign?'" Reyes said.

"We were unprepared. So, right there and then, we produced a yellow pad where people could write their signatures."

Reyes said his group had realized that it was time to help the people in voicing out their sentiments about Noynoy's presidency.

NOGS: We started the one-million-signatures campaign to urge Corazon Aquino to run against dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the 1986 snap elections. FILIPINO NOGS

The people are tired of the incessant politicians they usually see on TV advertisements, according to Reyes.

Lineage

"We believe in the Aquino lineage. Noynoy has a big responsibility on his shoulders. We believe he wouldn't betrayed his parents' name," Reyes said.

Reyes said he was impressed when he saw on TV how Noynoy was taking care of his nephew Joshua, the eldest son of the property tycoon Ramon Ang, who is the biggest investor (but still as a limited investor) which has the name of the [JSOTF-P]."

4 AFP camps

Gadlos said the Americans had also built and maintained temporary and permanent structures in De Edwin Andrews Air Base for their personnel and equipment, including radio and communication facilities.

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Like 1985

Belsey and Reyes, who were at the booth for whole day yesterday, said they saw two foreigners sign the petition while touring the Luneta.

Belsey said the group started the Cory Aquino for President Movement also outside the Buckner church where thousands of people go every Wednesday.

Cory had drawn two candidates that would convince her to run against Marcos, according to the NAPM.

"Once, if Marcos would declare snap elections, and two, if there would be one million signatures," Belsey

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The procrastinators

EDITORIAL

THE FAILURE OF SEVERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES to comply with a Supreme Court order—in particular, its directive in the landmark environmental case of MMDA vs Concerned Residents of Manila Bay ordering certain government agencies to "each submit to the Court a quarterly progressive report of the activities undertaken in accordance with this Decision"—reflects the Arroyo administration's utilitarian view of the decisions of the judiciary. It follows the rulings it finds useful; the rest it ignores.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is said to be concerned about the agencies' failure to comply. But the words coming from her spokesman dream with their name (to coin a phrase). "The Supreme Court has already ruled regarding this matter, so we urge all agencies involved to comply with the order," Anthony Golez said. We would credit the supposed urgency if the President had immediately issued executive orders to the agency heads. Golez reminded the agency heads of the President's "commitment" to the environment. We would credit that alleged commitment if the President had put her famous weapon to good use.

Instead, all we get, both from the President's spokesman and her alter ego at the Cabinet, a talk.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane gave the same (weak-sounding) reply—and we don't mean that in a good way. He said he had yet to see documents ordering the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) or other part in the Manila Bay cleanup. Then he gave a typically bureaucratic spin to the new lawsuit filed to cite the non-complying agency heads in contempt of court. "That would be good because we could all sit down and talk about the problem."

And yet, the DPWH was a party to the landmark case. Not a mere defendant, but indeed one of the petitioners. It is possible that Ebdane did not know his department was one of those petitioning government agencies who argued, essentially, that government had no role in the clean-up of Manila Bay until an actual and specific act of pollution (say, an oil spill) took place?

And yet, the DPWH was ordered by the regional trial court of Imus, in September 2002, "to remove and demolish structures and other nuisances that obstruct the free flow of waters to the bay." It is precisely this order that the DPWH contested all the way to the Supreme Court. Is it possible that Ebdane did not know his department was attempting to set aside a new legal obligation that carried high cost implications?

And yet, the landmark decision, reported on extensively last December, specifically orders the DPWH, "as the principal implementor of programs and projects for flood control services in the rest of the country since particularly in Bulacan, Batangas, Cavite and Laguna, in coordination with the DILG, PHIVOLCS, PAGASA-Clarkfield, MGB, DOE, and other concerned government agencies, [to] preserve and demolish all structures, constructions, and other environmental hostile lands in breach of RA 7279 and other applicable laws along the Meycauayan-Marilao-Obando (Bulacan) Rivers, the Tullahan (Bulacan) River, the Imus (Cavite) River, the Laguna De Bay, and other rivers, connecting waterways, and streets that discharge wastewater into the Manila Bay." It's No. 8 in the decision's dispositive portion (the DPWH also has a secondary mandate relative to the work of the MMDA). Is it possible that no DPWH lawyer told Ebdane that the government had lost the case, and that the department, together with other government agencies, had been given specific orders?

Truly, Ebdane's ignorance or arrogance (it is hard to tell which) takes the breath away.

First, aspects about the landmark case focused on the Supreme Court's passionate concern for Manila Bay. "The importance of the Manila Bay as a tax resource, playground, and as a historical landmark cannot be over-emphasized," the Court wrote.

And yet it is the troubling fact the government agencies got that is ripe for the books: "The era of delays, procrastination, and ad hoc maneuvers is over. Petitioners must recommend their transgressions, toil in imaginary, and buckle down to work before the problem at hand becomes unmanageable."

And yet, there it all is again. The non-compliance by Ebdane above all, but by other agency heads too, proves that, under the Arroyo administration, the "era of delays, procrastination and *ad hoc* maneuvers" is alive and well. That is much more than we can say for Manila Bay, dying in slow death.

Heartbreaking.

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'Writing on water'?

VIEWPOINT

Jose L. Mercado

"THERE'S A CROCODILE IN THERE BIG RIVER," the Water people say. And pandemonium lurks in those formula whether even quantified Pesos Oil for phone bills to Commission on audit reports of runaway travel costs by President Macapagal-Arroyo and managers on.

The President turned sick, Bulatlat.net has. It's other Galleguna '28 claimed, cost taxpayers "close to P2.5 billion," COMELEC from 2001 to 2009 exceeded by 65.1 billion—what else will be? If you copy boy's mouth adds up, that could buy 13.15 million units of tuo.

Stand with the dark data. De Palace spiral tax, until, exodus Deputy Executive Secretary for Administration and Finance Socorro Magpantay-Bernard budget says were increased. But first in clashes all trips, not just local outlay, Magpantay said.

Profligacy is contagion. At the Press Office the COA-muddled spent "work control over use of cellular phones" in 2008. That hang up a P1.93 million slot, four times the P1.27 million paid the year before.

"That was before my time," explained Press Secretary Cerge Remonde. Compared to other agencies, the phone bill was chicken feed. "COA accepted our explanation. That's why our budget was approved," Remonde said.

Lapses of encouragement are cited in a country where 20 out of every 100 skilled kids are unemployed. Five-bona regards do not survive the exams or these splurges. So will the dividend up to why. This proactively striking signs of "writing on water"?

Look at the track record. Arbitrary nasty findings are often overturned," insists the Philippine Human Development Report 2008. PHDR solicited such opinions for 45 government from between 1992 to 2007. This do-less no-penalty guarantees that excesses raise with household regularity.

Agencies do not hold themselves accountable for performance. "Congress does not check," PHDR observed. "Our problem is the lack of our own human the legal or administrative exercises against agencies [flaunting such behavior]."

Thus, this "crocs" have a field day. And in the congresses, they wouldn't overnight have that no less than the Constitution created in the CIA.

Lost through safety of the Department of Public Works and Highways over the last 25 years. Without exception, all were "adverse," PHDR's analysis of audit opinion reveals.

In search is not to offer cut—the stuff of congress, nor to admonish them blindfolded to the World Bank for road-building collusion was recounting.

Joseba "Kojo" Iriberri conducted his P726-million fertilizer scam on the Department of Agriculture's audit reports by the Dti, from 2002 to 2007, were studiously adverse.

In some Department of Agrarian Reform audits by the same period. So I a single audit for the Bureau of Internal Revenue got the good housekeeping seal of "Unqualified."

What's significant per annum with debate here year after year people die. Our health facilities, for example, are hand-starved. Eleven mothers die every day from pregnancy-related causes. Three deaths are preventable.

In the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, our country is still scrambling to raise from 162 company rise to 52 for Malaysians) down to 33 out of every 100,000 births. Because of hospices we won't achieve this goal by 2015.

"CDAs findings are not issued immediately during budget preparations. Congress goes ahead and approves without taking [deficiencies] into account," [illegible] have been implemented or not," PHDR added.

In the House of Representatives, members linked over "parochial concerns" found, poll found). Some are visible as Priority Development Assistance Fund, but the lion's in "congressional." These are exercised without the budgets of the DPWH and the Department of Transport and Communications.

PDAF allocations halted from P2.3 billion in 1993 P1.4 billion in 2007. Senators get P200 million each, congressmen P1.98 billion. Each.

That's the "pump cash." "In the 2009 National Expenditure Program, 'roads from first century to P100 million or more, 0.648 P224.4 billion." This is 16 percent of the whole national budget. "It is essential to find out which of these 'one-liners' are actually funded up by plum and projects or which simply serve as discretionary funds," PHDR added.

The Palace dips into savings and such items and calls it "realignment." Palace spokesman Gary Olivar justifies this as "budget flex."

The Palace won't talk on this—"not yet." The opposition hasn't had the gut to find out. And many orders to dump it in the drought. Here is when a constitutional body like the CDA could do more of performance auditing. But it prefers the less-taxing compliance auditing.

When probable fraud is found, the COA runs to the Ombudsman for action. Today's ombudsman is the first chief executive's schoolmate, Under Merceditas Gutierrez, courtesies by the Office of the Ombudsman is described. "But is in matters that have a poor record of disposition in cases and convictions," PHDR observes.

Today, an honest view put "But that need not be one. Indeed, we have a rich array of civil cases, see from 'lawsuits on solemn changes,' but from ordinary citizens who speak up and honor cases in constitutional bodies, like the CDA or the Commission on Elections, insisting on integrity."

Indeed, the deepest human defect is the dividuum between what one was capable of becoming and what in fact one has become."

(E-mail: jolmerbautista@gmail.com)

Power

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

HARIA SEPTILIRADO TOLD HER TELEVISION

It was the hardest thing in the world to persuade Lory Aquino to relocate to Malacañang after Edsa. She began by holding office at the Cojuangco Building, then went back to Times Street. Her aides pleaded with her to abandon the old home as it was a security nightmare. She finally did, but refused to move to the office Ferdinand Marcos had occupied in his time. She would have nothing to do with it. She moved instead to the Guest House, defending her decision by saying, "I am a guest of the Filipino people."

She was utterly convinced of that, and lived to it. Everything there, the furniture, the paintings, the bronzes—indeed all the pieces and opulence the Ilokos treasured with, or tended of—she said, belonged to the people. She would not take home any object and placing with the furniture, saying it would rather to play safely it was this peoples. The administration went such that at one point one of them, upon finding a bronzeline bar on a table, asked innocently: "Can I eat this? Or does this also belong to the people?"

Compare that to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's same-day spat about Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo requesting an Ilokos at the 44th anniversary of women in the world. Ilokos, of course, is clear that the lot does not confer a position over on power. Indeed, the implication is why GMA is powerful is not altogether flattering. It includes "I pulled every grab to in the works. Congressional allies are pushing through changes to the Constitution that would see the Philippines adopt a parliamentary system, then Arroyo could ... become prime minister."

But the infinite danger of calling someone powerful, notwithstanding the automatic hint of judgment about its being good or bad, is that it does give a hunter to her or him. It's the same thing with Time Magazine's Person of the Year. The rumors are always fateful of The Year is declared to be just about Time, the Person of the Year can be both good and bad. But the game of prominence by itself does surround. The person with an aura of being larger than life, subverting the qualifications.

All of it makes one wonder about the true meaning of power.

Where I stand at least, what being powerful means is being responsible for power. Or quite heroically, as in Cory's case, recognizing that power, particularly the kind imposed on leaders, emanates not from yourself but from the people. You are only as good a leader as you are recognized by your followers. And you are only as good a leader as you give your followers reason to do so. By earning their trust, by keeping their trust.

That is certainly not done by gorging on P1-million dinners. What gives that a leftover taste is the contrast between the way Cory treated public property while she was president and the way Gloria does while she is vice-president. Made even keener by the contrast in justifications. Cory was not unlike the acquisitive of my days, when revolution still drew idealists to us. Told like a hoarder in a story we read once, who believed that taking a single piece of thread from the masses was the true sin. Cory held the same thing, give or take a bar of chocolate or two.

Gloria? Well, let's just say may even she hopes.

Just as well, when I think, what being powerful means is being the custodian of power. That is right even from Orson Welles' who interviewed the world's most powerful men in his time, from Benny Goodger to the Shah of Iran, from Haile Selassie to Ben Kingsley. The only way to deal with power, she said, is to be distrustful of it. It's the only way to keep yourself honest. Or decent. Or modest. Because the history of powerful men and women did so, and none so. The test were just hysterical.

Cory did so, and was so. You can't have anyone who was more distrustful of posing who was more uncomfortable with power. Ivan said to me, she took only as much power as she needed to mend a tattered country, to heal a wounded land. To the extent that she knew how, born a leader she wasn't perfect enough times to know we some are less impactful than others. Her friends continue to talk of how during the humiliating challenges to her government, which were the coups, she never once thought to declare emergency rule or become lawful, instead how she "had the courage of defense of all, she said, it wasn't a loyal military, it was a loyal people. It wasn't the power of the soldiers' arms, it was the power of the people's love.

Armed with the same power, she left power willingly, quietly, gracefully.

Would that more Pinoys' explanation again about who she is powerful.

Perhaps but its not—it is, and its our system of redressing of the people that inhabit it. I have my own. In my book, the truly powerful people on this earth, past and present, are the likes of Mandela, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Albert Einstein, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Joe Burgos—and Corazon Aquino.

There were [are] people who never sought power the way many politicians, but sought us. It's the good to best they know how. Those were people who never founded parties the way are so based gold, counting the votes in coalitions every night and dreaming of more, but chided themselves with others at last they knew how.

In the final reckoning, whatever the merger and illusions and illusions of the present, only good is really longer than life, and it's just smaller than life. Look if Marcos and Cory and ask yourself who are, or is, the relevant that straddled the world. Look at Gloria and Cory and ask yourself who is larger than life and bigger than death.

Margaret Thatcher once said: "Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't."

Some people are ladies, some are just ladies of thought.

Last of the star-crossed brothers

THE DEBBIE YSTERDAY OF SEN. EDWARD Kennedy at 77 marks the passing of an era. By now the last of the star-crossed Kennedy brothers, but to the deluge of eulogies, the "baby brother" is now referred to as the "Liberal Lion" and the "Last of the Old Guards."

Ted Kennedy began his political career as the drafty scion of Chappaquiddick, and many pundits at that time wrote him off politically. That issue, which figured in his subsequent divorce from his first wife, cost him the presidency that the brothers were thought to have destined for him. But he went on to become one of the greatest legislators in the US Senate, where his bibliography in skills on both sides of the political fence became his most appreciated asset. He was the Senate's big catch when he came to power in 1962, when for the first time in 14 years in the presidency, Ted was involved in just about every major domestic legislation and issues, such as immigration reforms, civil and voting rights, environmental issues, health care issues, civil assault. But he attained most of all as the consummate health care proponent which has made Edward Kenedy Health Alliance, who could have used Kennedy's influence to memorialize the objectives.

Ted Kennedy's passing is the end of an era. Kennedy was the living patriarch of America's royal family. His famous tragedy-stricken clan. He might be the termination of the five most prominent members, the accidental deaths of young Kennedys, including Joe Jr. who died in WW II, the political murder of Candidate and other tragedies, but proved to be a pillar of strength.

* * *

Cecilio Alvarez and I worked enticing British Ambassador Peter Hayden to meet the media at 10:00 to our 0630 program to talk about the UK's presence in the Philippines. He asked the ambassador what he'd do if he didn't like having Angelica, and his quipped that if he went down to his neighborhood pub outside London in his jeepney would probably wonder, "What's Barnes up there for?"

But our session was an eye-opener. We learned that the UK was the third largest investor after the US and Japan from 2004-2008 period, but last year it became the biggest

Political Tidbits

Ayla Vida
Olivares-Cantemprate

direct foreign investor as due mainly to big investments in the energy sector and human resources. For instance, HSBC employs over 6,000 Filipinos in Manila in back-office work and HSBC's CEO has said they are going to hire more. The pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline employs over 1,000 people here while Unilever manufactures products for the region from here with over 3,000 people. In addition, our British compatriots have invested in Philippine mining at P7 company called Lepito, which plans to hire 2,000 people; Strategic Rock Drive Solutions, which renders support service for many multinationals; and the manufacturer of Johnny Walker. Among the other UK companies operating here are Mobil, Shell, Unilever and another Sea where an all-Filipino staff does architectural and engineering work for construction companies in Dubai. Symbolic of UK confidence here is that they are opening an office of 40 more, with offices needed a multi-story building in Taguig also proves the true improvements of Japan, South Korea and South Asia. The job is handled by 50 Filipino personnel under supervision of the British staff.

The reason is the growing US presence here, said Buckingham, is that "sometimes the Philippines underestimates its own capabilities." Citing the Filipinos' advantages such as their knowledge of English, their very good caring qualities that the people of this country do appreciate the quality of a certain Filipino working there, and their adaptability to various situations, the ambassador stressed that what the Philippines needs to do is "to bring that home abroad" about the great opportunities for investment here. In this regard, he said President Macapagal-Arroyo is doing "great work." It also challenges a strong message to our young people aspiring to ride on the crest of global technology.

* * *

The ambassador's lady said that when they have "two kids ready boys heads and also a career in foreign service," including her involvement in two charity organizations. One is the Philippine Children Foundation, founded by Imee Pedro, that runs an elementary school for some 600 children in Tondo, Manila. The school adds a grade each year, so that next year it will offer first year high school. Its target enrollment is 1,000 children. Its setting is most unique: from an old dilapidated warehouse, the school has moved to a very attractive, colorful and inviting facility. Its faculty is all volunteer, and the school has been so successful, a founder that lots on recycling, a total of 72 abandoned container vans were piled up into four-story buildings, which is the moment look a lot like satellite cities piled on top of the other. But when completed and finished, you will not recognize the container vans. The school will be formally inaugurated on Saint Januarius and 18, who has pledged to contribute some funds for the school, still about to it.

Jill was also deeply involved in CHIRP, a foundation that helps the children of impoverished overseas Filipino workers. She used to travel from North Forbes to Muntinlupa every week to teach the children English. She said her three cats with them are among the things that make seeing goodbye to her very difficult. Her husband, Ambassador Buckingham's upcoming garden where he can tend his orchids and bird-like plants are in bloom all year round.

* * *

During the four years they spent here, the Buckinghams were all over the country, bracing in the unspoiled beauty of El Nido, Palawan, or coughing it up with the whole garden in Boracay, Borneo, Peru, in a farewell piece in the Inquirer, quoted James Hamilton-Paterson who wrote that the Philippines is "crowned in such beauty, such affection and not as to stop the heat." Former Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo is too right when he said that Buckingham was "the Philippine's true and loyal servant. But he was also a good friend to our people and country."

'Yosi' breaks

"TIME TAN," HE SAID TO ME, PUSHING HIS CHAIR BACK.

"Sure," I said while watching for the cigarettes counter-cue boy. I followed him through the door.

Our college days are quite routinary. I go to school at around 7 a.m., study in the coffee shop across the street, and leave the few hours that I am there. After an hour or so, he will arrive. Then, some of our other friends will arrive as well, sometimes to

Young Blood

Nichie Ner

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their concerns? How do they see the current issues? We welcome contributions from the young people and below.—Ed

study our homework from us, or just hang out with us. When minutes before class, we leave the coffee shop to get something to eat breaks in the form of a break. Then lunch. Then class. Then in the afternoon, we have two

options. 1. to go back to the coffee shop, study a bit more, use dinner, then go home, or 2. go to the cinema but never school and then a bonfire or two of beer and chill out.

Generally, that's how our days go. It's boring, if you look at it from the outside. And sometimes I get bored, too. But there are times that I like the daily food I forward to. Sometimes, our every day is punctuated with post breaks. These 15-minute breaks are scattered throughout the day, without a specific time-slot or schedule. We do it when we feel like doing it. It may be as short as 15 minutes, or as long as an hour.

These spontaneous breaks are often I look forward to the most. It is during these breaks that I can see him for what he really is and know what is behind all those jokes and wild remarks. It is during these breaks that I can ask him questions that would otherwise go unanswered. It is through these breaks that I got to know him, that I got to connect with him, and it is because of these breaks that I got to fall for him.

We settled on a cattle-smoke. It was a weekend, so there were only few people in the coffee shop. I smoked a plaster at home. I lit up my cigarette. His face was clouded up and he was looking serious. He looks like that every time he's thinking about something or remembering or getting something done. I took a puff on my cigarette and put my feet up.

"Are you meeting your friends later?" I asked.

"Yes. I haven't seen them in more than a month already," he said, glancing at a girl who was passing by, wearing almost nothing.

I glanced at the girl, looked at him, and laughed. "Really? So what are you all up to later?"

"I'm not sure. I think we're going to drink a bit, then whatever goes." He smiled, and then inhaled into a cloud about one of the many cigarette he had with his high school friends.

I smiled. A million thoughts were running through my mind, although I didn't want to think. I just wanted to savor every minute of this time with him, knowing that this wouldn't last forever. I just wanted to be with him and talk with him about everything and nothing. But all I had was 15 minutes. And I knew better than to ruin it with a stupid question.

* * *

"Tito tayo," I asked him, pushing my chair back.

"Sure." She said as she crushed her last cigarettes inside her bag. I stood up and went to the door.

In all the moments of our every day in school, the one thing I look forward to the most are these short breaks I have with her. It's kind of a blessing that she smokes. Because if not, I don't think I would ever have gotten to know her. I don't remember the day we first talked. We've been in the same university for three years now, but I never knew of her existence until recently, when we became blockmates. Ito lang. I don't know, we were always get-togethers in Tito's of our classes. I didn't know it at that time, but looking back, I will forever be thankful for the day when she decided to talk to me.

I was standing outside, smoking alone when she showed up out of nowhere, with all those guys who trained out to be her friends. I was a bit intimidated by the sudden presence of the guys but said, when suddenly she waved and signaled for me to come over. Since I was alone and I had no reason not to, I went over to their side. She seemed okay enough as class, so I thought that maybe I should try making friends with her friends. They seemed cool enough. But we ended up to all of them, and I was left with her and her friends.

After that, we were almost always together. But I only got to know her during our short smoking breaks. Wherever we are together with other people, we don't talk about personal stuff. I always crack jokes, or bring her or say other friends. But it is during these times when I can really get to know her.

She's not hard to get to know naturally. And her a question, even out of the blue, and she'll answer it. But since I'm not the type to ask things offhand, it's not easy for me. I wait for these breaks to do so.

I lit up my cigarette as we were settling into the chairs outside. It was a bit cold, but not unpleasant. And, just as I'd hoped, she started to open up.

"Are you meeting your friends later?" she asked.

"Yes. I haven't seen them in more than a month already," I said.

From the corner of my eye, I saw a girl walking by dressed as minimally as possible. Only one thing existed my mind: I'm glad she's not like that.

I turned to look at her, and she noticed me glancing at the girl. She looked at her, and then back at me, and laughed. "Really? So what are you all up to later?"

"I'm not sure. I think we're going to drink a bit, then whatever goes," I smiled.

I love hearing her laugh. It's contagious. So I told her the story about a silly thing we did back in high school with my buddies, just to make her laugh again.

* * *

Dahlia Ona, 22, is a research associate in one of the country's top research agencies.

Notice to Youngblood contributors:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the private sector's building and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

OFWs' quest for healing

EDWIN ROBERT MEDEL, THE SO-CALLED "HUNGering priest" who is now working with a human rights group in Hong Kong, has come out with a collection of his reflections on his late younger brother Vincent who died of lung cancer in 2004 at the age of 37. A same has been filed against a giant tobacco company which must answer for the illness and death that cigarettes have caused and which Bobby is pursuing on behalf of his brother. But that is another story.

The book, "Vincent, Dying and Living," contains personal reflections, revelations to Bobby accompanied his brother in battle. The last and third portion of the book is a collection of stories of women Filipino workers (OFWs) in Hong Kong whom Father Bobby has met and counseled in his work in the city. He was with a number of them in the last days of their lives. The stories were written by the OFWs themselves, some in Filipino.

He told me: "This book is a compilation of stories of the OFWs who have come to me for counseling and dying. First, it is about my personal experiences as a caregiver in a frontier struggling through the threatening disease, as a son to Vincent, but to support during prayer and through the illness. A frontier where my self-assurance, my self-confidence, my self-esteem, my self-worth are much tested by deeper understanding deep, intimate and sometimes scary...

"Second, it is about my journeying with persons, especially women workers who have shared their deepest thoughts and feelings about life.

"Third, it is about how I am partially blessed by the journeys of the dying and by own journey that more commitment a new and different spiritual outlook to suffering, pain and death, to the human suppression and other confrontational issues."

In the book, we can see another side of Father Bobby, a private, intimate side that provides comfort to those who have been entrusted to him. He has shared his deepest thoughts and feelings about life.

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Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

on transgender seamstress with Vincent's picture and the words Life spent together as a friend spent."

Through all the stories, he has come to the stories of others. Father Bobby tries to find a unifying thread in the testimonies of both survivors and caregivers "in both confront the urgent and vital stories of death who has had them to a deeper and more fruitful appreciation of life."

In Hong Kong, Father Bobby has shepherded a small community called Bukas Palad which stands for hope, bukas at hoping dreaming something as Filipino beliefs, open and always ready to be of service to others. There are nearly 140% who are cancer survivors who also minister to one another and most especially to their fellow OFWs who are very ill.

"These other dying I have the sacred opportunity to witness dreamed and shared with me some, they that ought to prepare me when my time comes," Father Bobby said. "They bring their end to the black nothingness of death, to their beautiful begin, to their breathing weakness and the air begins to thin out into a delicate weight, a weaving, a blending, a balance of soul and body and spirit, the final reaffection to earth and blessed is with its peculiar wholeness and other new music to feature in life. It has always breathed from and with this feature, and now it breathes constantly completely whole and infinitely new."

Many OFWs in Hong Kong, mostly domestic helpers (DH), commute to Hong Kong even after the diagnosis of cancer. It is because there is no future in by clamp. One can avail of this as long as one is employed. If they go home to the Philippines, they think they would just be a burden to their families, so why not stay on?

Some compassionate employers let their ailing DHs stay on. But their time will not be extended. OFWs who must leave their jobs are taken care of by fellow OFWs who refer them to nursing them to health and even raise funds for them. It is love of neighbor at its best.

The doctor are hard-working but also inspiring. There is Dr. Annie Amor who had just come from the Philippine where she discovered she was pregnant and had breast cancer. She chose to carry the baby upon seven months before undergoing chemotherapy.

There was Carmen who had cancer of the cervix and had to undergo chemotherapy and radiotherapy. There was musician Chito who suffered a stroke. Gemma, despite her breast cancer, had to go on working even after her surgery and rehabilitation for her replacement in the family.

In 2007, I met friends from out-of-the-land Indonesia. She had understanding employers who let her stay on but without a salary, just so her visa would not be cancelled.

Carmen did not get sick in Hong Kong but she transferred to the sick among them. Lydia who had breast cancer. A difficult tragedy struck Carmen. She lost her son to stalker. She survived.

Father Bobby wrote: I want to see the smartness of my son. I asked him who he killed my son. His answer was strange and affronting: 'I don't know your son. I don't know who I killed your son.'

"I now appreciate Lydia and others who are dying of cancer. I have a greater sense of their unprecedented joy in the touching God. The time I celebrate for is decided to God on... We are members of the human family which has to become a community of caring and compassion. OFWs in Hong Kong have been a great source of healing love for sick and care for others. It is life giving."

The book is available at Bayside Bookstore on E. Rodriguez, Quezon City.

Send feedback to ceresdoyo@gmail.com

Like Chino, like Doy

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III

BACK IN 2008, CORY AQUINO TOLD A FEW people that someone would have to die for the Philippines to be free, and that someone would be Ninoy. Cory wouldn't have known then that the death she felt was required would turn out to be her own. Her wake and funeral—it served in what the country remembered what it was like to live in a free country, and the wake and funeral was at a continuing remembrance of things you see on videos and an unfolding discovery of a previously unknown country for the young, a coming and

Give up office a year before filing candidacy

LETTERS

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO'S BILL on committee on economic affairs is good opening. Cabinet and other government officials for their "information-rich." According to Santiago, she would rule these officials to justify the public funding for the "information-rich" But she claimed

power-seeking from media tycoons more than 2010 election campaign. Duterte, 8/12/09

There is a law that prohibits the appointment of losing candidates to any public office within one year from the elections. So, why not take a law disqualifying appointive officials from running for public office unless they resign from their posts a year prior to the filing of the certificate of candidacy? While this law will not stop crooks in government from stealing (which is for the Commission on Audit), Ombudsman's and Sandiganbayan's job to monitor, prosecute, and punish), it will help deter appointive officials from using government resources to campaign—and sign titles—themselves to the voters. People have cash-short memories; those officials will be hesitant to cross us if they step out of their offices.

Pilar would remember Mr. MMDA Bayani Fernando, Department of Health Secretary Jesse Robredo, DTI's Ronaldo Puno and Justice Ralph Recto had they resigned in November 2009? Some resigned effective Aug. 16, 2009, not on election day! Is it dubious that we have to wait from the Ateneo "multidisciplinarity" and become as early bird in Sen. Manuel Villar's senatorial ticket.

As we lambasted officials, the answer will deal with the need to reforming their corrupt practices in the media and on the Internet. And there's the COA, Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan to step hand with. Of course, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism knows something.

—EDGAR G. ESCALDO, escalde77@yahoo.com

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MyVote.MyTurn.

HOW I WILL DECIDE

The Inquirer keeps me informed. The 2010 election is really about _____ (KEY TOPIC)

_____.

Our next president needs to be someone capable of _____ (CHARACTER TRAIT)

like _____ (POLITICAL HERO), and not

capable of _____ (POLITICAL IGNOMINY).

No one knows for sure what will happen. But I will make my vote happen.

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Or send SMS: Type 2010 Name Address Not Topic Character Trait Politician Hero Politician Scandal and send to 0918 838 5566.

INQUIRER

Monthly, our Research Department will collate the results which will be posted in the Inquirer. Entries filled with good-natured grievance about innovative approach/ process/ live opinion will receive surprise prizes.

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Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) announces the opening for application or recommendation of the judgeship positions in the new branches (Res. 3 of A & E) of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) Iligan City. Applications or recommendations may be submitted not later than **28 September 2009 (Monday)** to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512; Fax No. 552-9827; e-mail address: jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph or jbc@sc.judiciary.gov.ph).

The JBC likewise announces that the following are applicants for judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (REGION X) 7TH JUD. CAGAYAN (Br. 11): ATTOLDA, Paul Jr. R.; BALINANG, Lucrecio C.; BETGUEN, Edwin O.; CAMPOS, Salvador B.; CASTILLO, Edmar Sr., P.; GARCIA, Dennis L.; LUYUN, Cleofredo A.; MAYAM, O. Pedro G.; MORALES, Raul S.; **CAMARINES SUR, CARIDO (Br. 32):** MAYAM-O, Pedro G.; **(REGION III) 5TH. DOMINGO RUEVA ECIJA (Br. 89 & 39):** ARIZALA, Angela R.; BUENAVENTURA, Noel J.; CAGARON, Librado T.; CRUZ, Ranel S.; DIZON, Rodolfo B.; DYSANGCO, Alain S.; GARONG, Rizon M.; JURADO, Cyrus D.; MEREZ, Angel L. M.; MONTERO, Fernando Jr. S.; PEÑO, Nancy G.; REYES, Amelia C.; REYES, Rolando Ramon R.; ROMANO, Ireneo A.; **TOMAS, Rolando S.; VIZCARRA, Eleanor Teodosio M. (REGION IV) SAN PABLO, LAGUNA (Br. 30):** AGOZARA, Priscilla U.; AGRAVA, Gerald G.; ALBERTO, Gabriel C.; ARAGONES, Ricardo E.; ARUMA, Godofredo G.; BANDONG, Dinah Evangelina B.; BELLUGA, Amy Molino S.; BERAMO, Danilo S.; BITON, Lily V.; BORJA, Crispin Jr., G.; BUENALUZ, Hector Jr. D.A.; CALDERON, Julita M.; CALIS, Elpidio R.; CAMPOMANES, Marilyn R.; CAPUNO, Bruno G.; CHUA, Elvira C.; DE GUZMAN, Hanabiano S.; DEYNATA, Perla M.; DOCENA, Zaldy B.; DUMLAO, Florentino Jr. R.; ELEAZAR, Victor V.; ESCOTO, Gina C.; FABROS, Lamberto C.; GALARDO, Pablo Jr. A.; GO, Nestle A.; HERNANDEZ, Ireneo D.; HILARIO, Mary Catherine P.; LATOSA, Victoria Cerino G.; LIM, Ma. Jean C.; LOQUIAS, Thelma L.; MANALASTAS, Jose M.; MANTILLA, Apollo S.; MARQUEZ, Gregoria V.; MAYAMBU, Ilonera C.; MATURAN, Artuo Juanito T.; MELENDRES, Imelda A.; MENDOZA, Ernesto C.; NOLASCO, Ma. Marjorie U.; OBEJAS, Josselin D.R.; PASTRANA, Dennis R.; PEREZ, Angelo C.; PEREÑA, Violeta M.; QUINTANO, Ireneo M.; REDONA, Pedro M.; RICABLANCA, Cynthia M.; SAMPAGA, Maria Lolibel S.; SERRANO, Jesus D.; TOLEDO, Guillermo Jr., T.; VEGA, Gregorio Jr. L.; VILLABOBEZ, Gregorio M.; VENTURANZA, Alberto E.; VENTURANZA, Pilita O.; VILLAGORTA, Cleto III R.; VILLEGAS, Mary Antonette Y.

METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT (MC.39) SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA (Br. 58): ADARLO, Elvira G.; ALGERTO, Gabriel C.; ALFONSO, Alfonso P.; ALIERMO, Philgerard C.; ALMAZAN, Menard Genaro S.; ALVIAR, Benita M.; AZUCENA, Rodolfo Jr. P.; BAES, Shallani L.; BALMED, Jose Jr. M.; BANTUCHAN, Ruth E.; BARZUELA, Flerida Z.; BUENALUZ, Hector Jr. D.A.; CAISE, Rosario Bobe D.; CALINA, Gwyn P.; CALLANTA, Jaris D.; CAMONGOL, Reynaldo M.; CAMPANILLA, Maria B.; CASTRO, Josefina Ma. S.; COMOS, Linda A.; CRUZ, Elvie R.; DAVID, Aileen Liza M.; DE LA CRUZ, Rene M.; DEL ROSARIO, Rodrigo I.; DELOS SANTOS, Rolando K.; DEMAGUILA, Elenita C.; DOMINGO, Richard T.; FLOR, Poal A.; FRANCISCO, Evangeline M.; GAPUZAN, Nestor V.; GARCIA, Dennis L.; IGNACIO, Sharlo Mabie A.; LAGMAN, Jose D.R.; LAZARO, Jennifer M.; LIM, Edmida D.; LUY, Salvador P.; MACAPAGAL, Ariel D.; MANTALA, Apollo S.; MAPALO, Anita C.; MATADANG, Peter Paul A.; MEER, Phoebe C.; MENDIMUETO, Norma Casandra A.; MIGUEL, J. Ernie Ernest R.; MONTESA, Jacob II M.; MONTESA, Rainelda E.; MORALES, Baltazar A.; NABAZA, Suzanne C.; ONTALAM, Cesar K.; ORTIZ, Jose Jr. R.; OSMEÑA, Rhoda Magdalene M.; PANGILINAN, Maria Gecil L.; PALISAC, Anastasacio C.; PRESTO, Ilmie Michiko G.; RAFA, Dennis J.; RASA, Libertad R.; REGINO, Precious T.; REYES, Renato B.; RICALDE, Tomas Jr. T.; SALOMGA, Rolando C.; SARMIENTO, Serfeso Jr., U.; SERRANO, Jesus D.; SUBONG, Gregorio Jr., P.; TOBIAS, Caroline L.; TOLENTINO, Ma. Lisa L.; TORRALBA, Ronald G.; UY, William T.; VILLENA, Vincent L.; YU, Elda B.; ZORILLA, Walter G.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (REGION III) BOTOLAN-CABANGAAN, ZAMBALES: CALINA, Gwyn P.; MANAGAC, Saulencio M.; QUINTANO, Ireneo M.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than **08 SEPTEMBER 2009** (Tuesday) to the JBC Secretariat.

All applicants for judicial positions must submit to the JBC ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1 (Revised September 2007); proof of Filipino citizenship; and 2009 Ombudsman, NBI and Police Clearances, and other requirements before the date scheduled for their interview. **Those who fail to submit the necessary requirements shall neither be interviewed nor considered for nomination.**

26 August 2009.

MA. LUISA D. VILLAMAYA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex Officio Secretary

JBC - August 27, 2009

Across the NATION

Lawyers ready suits vs coal mining

VIRAC, CATANDUANES—THE LOCAL CHAPTER of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) has issued a call for a "legal revolution" against mining in any part of the island province.

"We are ready to initiate legal actions against the natives and perpetrators of the destruction and exploitation of our island paradise," said a manifesto signed by lawyer Jose V. Cabrera, IBP chapter president and governor for Bicol, and 18 other officers.

Expressing its vehement opposition to any form of mining, the IBP called upon all citizens, clergymen and Bicolnon to condemn and oppose any and all mining exploration, activities and applications on the island.

The manifesto said it was appealing to the mining and natural resources department, the provincial board and all municipal councils in Catanduanes to deny any application for mining in any part of the province.

Top critics

It said mining "will only benefit the greedy, the selfish and the rapacious of a few to the detriment of the people."

The IBP manifesto was the latest in a series of expressions of support for the anti-mining stance of the Church, local officials, the nongovernmental organization Ramon Magsaysay Rovers Mining, and top provincial officials led by Gov. Joseph Cua and the provincial board.

An online petition launched last week by the Group of Environment Enthusiasts of Catanduanes Mountaineering and Outdoor Club (Gemcmoc) has attracted 200 signatories so far.

The petition asks to condemn the permit granted Monte Oro Resources and Energy Inc. (Morei) to explore Catanduanes for coal deposits, worth at least P6 billion.

The petition is at www.petitiononline.com/STOPMINE/petition.html.

Hearings set

Another group, the Philippine Association of Scientists and Seminarians (Pass), expressed full support for the Church's stand against mining in the province.

Anti-mining groups were expected to raise pointed questions during the first of three public hearings to be conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE) on the planned coal exploration on Sept. 14 (not Aug. 27 as earlier reported) in Catanduanes town.

Bishop Manolo delos Santos, of the Diocese of Virac, will be present at the hearing with members of the broad coalition Kalikasan Bicol and Kasiya Bikol.

The other public hearings are set Sept. 16 in Catanduanes and Sept. 17 in Pengpengbilan.

Select audience

One mayor who asked not to be identified said DOE representatives had narrowly screened the province to invite their allies around the hearings.

But, the mayor said, the DOE officials also asked if it was possible for the hearings to be attended only by mayors and members of the council.

The request, however, was quickly shot down by mayors who demanded that the hearings be open to the public.

Alan del Valle, vice mayor of San Andres town, said DOE representatives, accompanied by Jose de la Concha, exploration manager of Monte Oro Resources and Energy Inc., had asked for an audience with members of the town council. Ferwin Gimaro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

VILLAGERS wash clothes in a river in the town of Pangpengbilan, Catanduanes, one of several villages that face the onslaught of coal mining if plans push through to explore and unearth coal in the province.

Cordillera warned of crop losses in climate change

BAGUIO CITY—AGRICULTURE officials in the Cordillera said they were expecting revenue losses in the agriculture sector this year due to the effects of changing weather patterns on the planting and harvest cycles.

Dulce Jerry Bellang, Department of Agriculture-assistant regional director, said the DA sent teams to the Cordillera's major rice and vegetable producing provinces to orient farmers on measures they could take to deal with the adverse effects of climate change.

Bellang said two groups of agriculturists were sent to Ifugao and Benguet to draw to monitor and study changing weather and agricultural patterns so local farmers would learn to adapt with the impact of climate change.

Dulce Pinacan, DA Cordillera spokesman, said the vegetable industry in the country may collapse if the measures fail.

He said 300,000 metric tons of vegetables grown and harvested in the Cordillera make up 60 percent of the country's annual vegetable production.

Reports from the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council said heavy rains brought by Typhoon "Kiko" early this month destroyed P5.7-million in crops and damaged P274-million in infrastructures in Baguio City, Benguet and Mt. Province.

Lito Morad, another DA Cordillera agriculturist, said the agency noted a 20 percent decrease (60,000 mt) in the region's 300,000-MT vegetable production from January to June this year due to the recent weather.

Pinacan said stronger typhoons induced more landslides and erosion that damaged Cordillera farms this year.

Bellang said the DA has also started preparing for extreme drought brought by the El Niño phenomenon that is expected to hit the country in the last quarter of the year.

He said the DA wants to ensure sufficient supply of rice, corn and vegetables during the droughts.

He said the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has pledged P2 billion for measures to deal with climate change in the Cordillera.

Ifugao and Benguet were chosen as pilot areas due to efforts of local governments to foster partnerships between and conserve their ecological systems through the promotion of critical watersheds, he said.

"The expected outcome of this mitigation program [is a blueprint for] a systematic planning and harvest season based on the study of the changing weather patterns," he said.

"We need to prevent further financial losses to the agricultural sector and we also want to protect and conserve the environment at the same time."

Pinacan said irrigation systems, small reservoirs and water impounding structures would be introduced to farming villages that would be hit by drought.

The measures include training and workshops for farmers so they would learn new farming styles and techniques, he said.

"The warm weather makes crops and animals susceptible to diseases. The better the weather, the smaller the estimates of the crops and animals to die, hence," he said. Bonifacio Cabuloy, Inquirer Northern Luzon

A GROUP of men sells fruits and other agriculture products door-to-door in the Cordillera, which was one of the areas tagged most likely to suffer from crop losses because of climate change.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ TAGUM CITY

Car theft suspect dead

POLICE killed a car theft suspect who resisted arrest in a village here last Sunday.

Police said Ilario Agcopra, a minor in Mt. Diwalwal, Compostela Valley, died a hundred of Mahanay village, New Corella, Davao del Norte, jumped out of a public utility jeep after he was recognized by a witness.

Police caught up with Agcopra in Barangay Apokon. Agcopra, police said, resisted arrest, forcing policemen to shoot him. Antonio Lim, Inquirer Mindanao

■ NAVAL, BILIRAN

New state university

THE ISLAND province will soon have a university after the Senate passed a bill that would establish the Naval State University (NSU).

Senate Bill No. 2140, which passed on final reading last Aug. 11, seeks to convert the Naval Institute of Technology into a state university to be known as the Naval State University.

The bill also seeks to integrate with the new university the Biliran National Agricultural College in Biliran town. Rainier C. Rontoyo, Inquirer Visayas

■ USA - CRUZ, Laguna

Earwigs for farmers

THE OFFICE of the provincial agriculturist on Wednesday distributed 500 heads of black earwig (Dinetus coracinus) to control and prevent pests in coconut and banana farms in Laguna.

The earwig, a predator insect, feeds on the eggs of mealy bugs and its nymphs, pests common in coconut and banana trees, said provincial agricultural Marlon Ilotino.

The mealy bug is a carrier of the banana plant disease called bunchy top, which may in the long run, affect the production of coconut (mealy bugs) in coconut palms, causing the tree to dry up, he said.

Municipal agriculturists were set to inform earwigs and black farmers how to culture the insects themselves. Marlon Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ KIDAPAWAN CITY

Farmer dies in blast

A FARMER died while 20 others were injured in a grenade explosion in Barangay Gen. Luna in Carmen, North Cotabato, Thursday.

Maj. Winston Ibrado, chief of the Carmen police, identified the late fatality as Rickey Minanga, 21, and a resident of Sitio Tabuloc in the same village. Carlo Agcaoili, Inquirer Mindanao

PANLILIO'S FIGHT

Protestants join protests vs recount in Pampanga

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—While the local Catholic Church has yet to speak on the political fight that one of its own is having, leaders of Christian churches in Pampanga have found belief Gov. Eddie Panlilio and protested the congressional recount of votes cast in the 2007 gubernatorial race.

Leaders of the Pampanga Christian Ministers' Council (PCMC) said they believed that Panlilio, a Catholic priest, won in the 2007 elections as there was no need for the Commission on Elections to recount the votes.

"The institution [Comelec] which counted the votes and proclaimed Among Ed as governor should stand by the integrity of [its] decision," said GC del Rosario, PCMC director.

Though some priests have joined rallies against the recount, Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto has yet to issue an official statement to represent the position of the Catholic Church on the process.

Joy Pangco, PCMC chair, said she expects other religious leaders in the province to make their positions known.

"If all religious leaders believe in the integrity of the 2007 elections, we are inviting them to take a stand against the recount," she said.

A lawyer for former Board Member Lilia Pineda, Panlilio's rival, said his client was heading in the recount that was ordered by the Supreme Court. Panlilio's lawyer, however, disputed this.

Panlilio won over Pineda by 1,147 votes in 2007, but Pineda contested the result, saying fake election returns with her number "Nueve Baby" were not counted.

Pangco said while pastors from the PCMC have vowed not to stop praying until another "miracle" happens, referring to what they considered a miraculous loss when Panlilio won over veteran politicians in the province in 2007.

However, Pangco said the group will respect the result of the recount, even if Pineda turns out to be the winner, because "it is the will of God."

Del Rosario said the PCMC's support was not for Panlilio alone. "We're not doing this as a campaign for Among Ed when he runs [for president or any position] in 2010. We're doing this [to preserve] democracy in Pampanga," he said.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo said the recount has now become a legal issue. "It's no longer a political issue. The rules of the Comelec will govern the procedure," Arroyo said on Monday. Charlene Gapasin with a report from Dennis Orcino, Inquirer Central Luzon

BALLOT BOXES from Pampanga fill a room at the Commission on Elections in Manila where votes in the 2007 gubernatorial elections in the province were being counted.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Libra Jan Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Florelin G. Sobrevinas

Looking for 'Lelang'

By Maricar Cinco
Inq. Bicol City

MANILA-BASED IRMA CONCEPCION-YU is longing to fill a huge gap in her family's history. All she knew was that her great grandmother was once a topnotcher.

"There is this part of my life that remains a question mark. My grandmother told me bits and nothing. Daddy was like keeping secrets from me," she remembered.

In Lagonoy, Ms. Rosario Ilos Mercado's similar yearning for the various rehash his grandfather had described as having a great name that could break glass.

"I felt ashamed that the family knew nothing about her fairy tale. I had been hearsay and said, except that she was a great singer," he said.

Fifteen years, Irma and Rosario embarked on a single quest of piecing together memories, archives, news clippings and stories told some 95 years ago about Maria Carpena, the first Filipino recording artist known as the "Nightingale of Zaragoza," but others they refer to as their "Lelang."

MARIA Carpena, "Nightingale of Zaragoza."

Falling into place

In 1997, Danny Dalay, founder of the Walang Pinoy band that played all Filipino songs, organized a tribute for Carpena at the historical Cementerio de Colmar and she then and there, at least some of the late soprano.

"I just knew he was a relative because he was there. We were introduced, but he was a male," Irma said of her first meeting with Rosario.

"We never knew how we were connected. He just gave me his calling card," Rosario said.

He believed that tribute "brought back the name Maria Carpena in the minds of the people."

Since then, he started collating clippings and biographies about his Lelang. He also contacted relatives in Laguna who could possibly add information to the puzzle.

"I asked an aunt to make a family tree since for some reason gave me the youngest member of Irma. 'Oh my God, that was her,' I remember saying to myself. Everything seemed to fall into place," Rosario said.

Irma, whose father Hugo Concepcion was the son of Florita Carpena's child, was the closest surviving relative. Rosario was from the line of Carpena's older sibling.

Fallen star

Carpena, born on Oct. 22, 1886, was fifth of the eight children of Camilo Carpena, a homebuilder of four hands in Sta. Rosa, then a town in Laguna.

She started singing as a tyke, a contralto voice soprano, at the age of 13.

It was in 1901 when Carpena was first invited to perform on stage in a benefit concert at Ilo Zorilla, an elite theater at that time in Manila. It was also her show that drew her father to disown her for reasons that singe singers does were regarded as lowly and disgraceful.

"But Lelang was a woman ahead of her time, she knew what she wanted," Rosario believed.

Based on accounts, Carpena moved to Manila and married a cabaret dancer-drama cartilage's maker, Jose "Pepe" Alcantara. She bore him two children, Jaime and Florita.

Carpena starred in several stage plays produced by then Severino Reyes, founder and director of the stage troupe Gran Compañia de Zarzuela. In 1902, she starred in "Binda Sioso" and "Salang Sagar," which launched her team-up with actor Victorino Cariño.

Carpena was 16 when in the middle of a performance, she was informed that her husband had died.

"It was an error in books that years flowed from her eyes and people thought it was part of her performance," Rosario said.

Carpena continued her career until her first recording was made under Victor Recording Co. in 1908 in America. This included her solo performances of "Ang Mga Dios," "Ang Bulalang Sinaksi," "Caraguilda Rondinata and Aire Gitano," "Ang Mayo" and "Ang Gaicha," the also had several duets.

"She fell in love again and this time, with a prominent, married man," said Rosario. The affair bore them a son named Mario who on record was never allowed to use his father's last name.

He said there were accounts that Carpena lived shortly in Hong Kong with the child and her lover, leaving behind her first two children to relatives in Sta Rosa.

Carpena came back to the Philippines and on March 8, 1911, she reportedly died of "unknown" abdominal pain.

Finding Lelang

"Call me crazy but I cannot explain this feeling that Lelang wants to come home (in Lagonoy). Maybe she wants forgiveness," said Rosario, recalling his sleepless nights and visions of his great grandmother.

"The problem was we had some data when she was buried. Everybody was telling us it was impossible to find her remains," he said.

During his search, Rosario came across a clipping from the Lopez Memorial Museum that pointed him to the Binondo Catholic cemetery now known as La Loma cemetery, where Carpena was supposedly buried.

In June, he went to the burial place and "brought nothing but the faith of finding the remains, for whatever reason, in this 54-hectare cemetery in the heart of Manila. Search on Aussie [see 2] was arising for the worst," he said.

He went into the cemetery records and heard that Carpena was indeed buried there but that the body was exhumed in 1970. "There were no records of transfer," he said.

Frustrated, Rosario went home to Lagonoy and just then, he realized that the exhumation was made so that another set of remains would be entombed there, as was the old practice to remunerate. He went back two weeks later.

"I was led [this time] by an undertaker to the tomb of Jaime Alcantara, but the dates engraved on the niche were wrong. I went to (restroom) again and was about to leave then when I just happened to look closer at the poles of the niche," he recalled.

Rosario said the other niche was dusty and almost unrecognizable. The undertaker cleaned off the one with a leaf dust revealed the name Maria Carpena Alcantara.

"I exclaimed, 'Lelang, I found you after almost a hundred years!' I couldn't explain the feeling of happiness," he said.

Art center

Irma said a lot of questions about Carpena's life had remained unanswered and finding the missing links or her lineage continues, even more after her tomb was discovered.

She said the family was keen on transferring Carpena's remains back to her hometown to Laguna, but other relatives had yet to be informed about the find.

On July 27, the family in coordination with the city government, organized a small tribute to Carpena in Sta. Rosa City.

It is also setting up the Francisca Reyes Aquino Philippine Carpena, a nonprofit organization that would train young artistes in classical music, dance, theater and even bring back "carnaval" during town fiestas.

"It's a big dream. But I also dream of finding the remains of Lelang and I did succeed," Rosario said.

MARIETTA Carpena, Irma Yu and Rosario Sta. Maria, descendants of "carcuela" star Maria Carpena, hold their "Lelang's" portrait.

Art, culture, history meet in this garden on UP campus

By Clarice Coking-Pulombarit
Los Baños, Laguna

ART, CULTURE AND HISTORY mingle in this small garden inside the University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) campus in Laguna.

Luis E. Yee Jr., an internationally renowned artist, and Reid Javier, a former UPLB chancellor and UP president, have pursued their dream to develop the first sculptural garden in the country.

Known as Anyaso to art circles, Yee, 65, who is a UPLB artist-in-residence and special courier, said the idea cropped up a long time ago when Javier wanted to put up a sculpture garden.

He was then thinking of restoring the university's portraits or facades of old buildings (when UPLB was the UP College of Agriculture) that have become part of its historical heritage.

Although they both agreed to do the project, Yee said it was not implemented because Javier had become UP president. It was only during last year's Loyalty Day (Oct. 18) when they met again and pushed on with the plan.

With initial fund coming from an alumnus-donor, Mario Labarbas, the project finally began, with four of the five portals to be restored.

YEE

Historic portals

The first is the poultry portal in the Animal Science Department, the site of the sculpture garden. The rest will be enhanced, repaired and landscaped but still not be transformed into gardens for lack of space.

The 1,500-square meter poultry portal garden had a "soft launching" on Aug. 20. It has a tiled open area flanked by trees, while behind it is a chicken mosaic representing the portal's duration. There huge sculptures sculptures were as special seats.

Explaining the concept, Susan Ong, the landscape architect, said the design stems from an ecological food web of symbiotic relationships...chicken feeding on earth worms, earthworms helping nourish the trees, trees growing and old leaves falling back to the soil where the earthworms thrive.

"I wanted it to be a piece of learning for students," Ong said.

She said that when he saw the chicken at the portal, he thought of creating something colorful—giant earthworms draped like beaks, which he described as "maple of the soil." The earthworm-chicken composite shows a dynamic flavia.

Ten sculptures will be placed in the garden.

Functional art

The earthworms are "functional art," Yee said. "It is a very minor art form involving the fine arts, industrial design and architecture."

"The functionality [of the object] is still there but it is more on the art side, around 60 percent, so sometimes chairs like this are difficult to sit on, for example," he said.

"It was a different materials in his works, especially multiple materials like rugs and bones.

A fine art scholar in UP Diliman and apprentice of the youngest national artist, Napoleon Abueva, Yee held his first one-man exhibition in installation art on campus in the 1970s.

In the late 1980s, he pioneered this type of art in the country and in Southeast Asia. His series, "Open Doors," "Another Place in the Island Universe" and "Memorial Park" exhibitions.

Among his most recent works was a piece shown during the 2007 Earth Day commemoration, which covered two-thirds of the entrance of land in front of the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila.

He is working for the establishment of an artists' village in Baler, Aurora province.

Yee has been residing in Los Baños since 1974 and was awarded one of the town's most outstanding citizens. He hails from Agusan del Norte.

Inspiration

Yee said he got involved in the sculptural garden project to extract people to the area. "It will be a new space for the community," he said, though the place has already been known because of the earthworms.

He hoped it would encourage other people to make their own sculpture gardens. "This would be wonderful chances for sculptors to show their work."

UP president Javier, in his message, who attended the launching, said that beyond the structures were the memories, sharing her experiences as an undergraduate doing her thesis in the old Animal Science Building.

She noted that the UPLB could also generate income from the place as venue for social and other functions.

The garden is already finished, but the sculptures are yet to be done and put in place. Yee said the project proponents had wanted him to do all the pieces, which he added, was not a problem.

He has already asked sketches from his artist friends, who have agreed to receive only P200,000 for their works which would otherwise cost much more, as their gifts to UP.

He said the project, including the restoration of the portals, would cost some 9 million.

Those interested in helping the garden project may give their donations to the UPLB Alumni Association Inc. through Rely Alejog, c/o OPARM Secretariat, tel. no. (049)536-8649.

THE FAÇADE of the old poultry husbandry building at the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

RENOWNED international artist Luis Yee Jr. thought of making giant earthworms as functional art for the garden to relate to the "chicken" at the portal.

Policemen suspected of shielding slay suspect

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—It initially that four two members and a friend in a shooting rampage here on Saturday but accused the police of protecting the suspect, a member of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), who has not surfaced since the attack.

The relatives named the suspect, one in Jeffrey Indiogia, 24, died at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, six months from breath before the burial of their father, Melanio, 49. The third brother, Mark John Maximino, 20, will be buried on Sunday.

Senior Supt. Marvin Rodriguez, chief of the CIDG in Central Luzon, said a senior commander here "on the hook" of the suspect, Benedicto Pangan, a non-commissioned employee of the CIDG.

The police were going to take Pangan soon as the city prosecutor issued an arrest warrant were completed for double murder, frustrated murder, attempted murder and grave threats against him, Bernabe Bolisoni.

He said Pangan reached him by phone on Monday and gave unconvincing brokers.

Chief Supt. Leon Nilo de la Cruz, regional police chief, said another task force, led by Pampanga police commander, Senior Supt. Gil Lubba, has been helping locate Pangan.

Reports received by the law-general fire of the Philippines in Pampanga, which has been providing free legal assistance to the relatives of the victims, said Pangan had yielded to Lubba, his former boss.

Lubba on Wednesday said he still at an custody of the suspect.

"We have asked the police to help us secure justice by getting the suspect and making him face the law. It's been four days and we haven't seen a shadow of Pangan. It seemed he's being protected. Is that because he is one of them?" said Edna de Guzman, a daughter of Melanio Indiogia. De Guzman spoke at a mediation center of a regional trial court here.

Her mother Evelyn, an assistant secretary at the DENR-Pampanga, is a prime witness in the case. Evelyn and Melanio walked to a gift box where Jeffrey and Mark John died in widely after they figured in a quarrel with Pangan's friend, Alex Bernabe. —Jimmie Oreja, Inquirer Central Luzon

CAUMO LITE

The Ambassadors de Legazpi, a new commercial center that promises to stir business activity, rises in Legazpi City but enthusiasm for its opening has turned into anxiety following reports that a casino would rise together with it.

Satur says plot to keep GMA in power alive

OCAMPO

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Bayan Muna Rep. Saturnino Ocampo has appealed for continued vigilance against efforts pushing President Macapagal-Arroyo to stay longer in power, saying the President and her allies have not given up even on the condition of upstate to prolong her political reign.

Speaking in a forum here on Tuesday, Ocampo said the opposition to any form of constitutional change, especially moves at Charter change, through constituent assembly (Con-ass) and constitutional convention (Con-con), may appear to have slowed down their efforts or are divided. Malacañang has "not explicitly stated" where it stands on the issue.

In Congress, he said the percentage of legislators supporting the Con-con route has gone down.

Ocampo said the House committee on constitutional amendments preferred doing it through a constitutional convention by electing Con-con delegates during the 2010 elections.

"It appears that they're leaning if it's the next administration and the 15th Congress to amend the Charter," he said.

Lubba by voters protecting their representatives to seek down support for the Con-con route, through House Resolution No. 1109, might have worked and the outpouring of sentiments after the death of former President Corazon Aquino strengthened efforts to push Con-con, he said.

The way of pork

But since the 2010 elections are near, Ocampo said the Arroyo administration might use the pork barrel (countryside development funds) to lure legislators belonging to the administration Lakas-Kampi-CMD to push through with Con-con.

Ocampo said the last option for Ms Arroyo was to remove first, despite the cracks in the Lakas-Kampi-CMD merger, the fact an absolute majority of Congress who she is elected representative of the second district of Pampanga in 2010.

"Still, Ms Arroyo has not given up even (on) the smallest of options. If her party gets the absolute majority, then she'll stay in power," he said.

200 gov't rice outlets in East Visayas probed for overpricing

By Vicente Lubo
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—More than 200 Tindahan Natin (TNOs) in Eastern Visayas are being pressurized closure after the National Food Authority (NFA) found these were violating price caps on sale of NFA rice.

Benjamin Marin, NFA regional director, said on Monday (8/17) that in this region, there are about 1,300 TNOs that should sell only NFA rice for P18.25 per kg.

Marin said only the Tindahan ni Pulogbis and barangay-based outlets could sell NFA rice for P20 per kg.

An audit team from NFA Manila earlier conducted a random inspection of these outlets.

Many of the violators were found in Samar (67) and Leyte (71) provinces. Marin said in an interview at the sidelines of the Regional Development Council meeting in Palo, Leyte.

Marin, however, said there was no outright closure at ending stores because of due process. "The operators would be given a chance to explain," he said.

However, the said 30-40 TNOs in the province had already admitted their violations were seen closed, Marin added.

Marin said most of the erring TNO operators were found to be overpricing.

Other violators, he added, were either found to be diverting NFA rice to commercial outlets or to unregistered end users or failed to display price tags.

Marin said for every 50-kg bag of NFA rice being sold at the TNO, the government loses P315.

"The government doesn't expect or lose sight of the losses as long as these (subsidized rice) will reach the intended beneficiaries," he said, adding that a TNO lost a lot of the low allowance it would subject to.

Floating toilet buoyed by planned Bolinao launch

By Gabriel Cardenas
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—OFFICIALS of the health department here a contact Mayor Shasha official to this one.

First, there were floating restaurants, floating casinos and floating hotels. Now, there's a floating toilet.

And it will be for the taxpayers, said Dr. Eduardo Gonzalez, regional director of the Department of Health's Center for Health Development (CHD) in Northern Luzon.

Death toll

"This is our innovative approach to address the perennial problem of outbreaks of diarrhea in Dagupan as brought about by the contamination of water supplies with E. coli, cholera bacteria and other waterborne pathogens," Gonzalez said.

Last year, he said, at least 200 Dagupan residents died of diarrhea and 10,000 others were treated in various hospitals.

The floating toilet will be launched on Thursday in Barangay Lucao at a fishing village along the Dagupan-Bolinao river in Bolinao town. The device will be put to use for its practicability, strength and usefulness to the fishing community, Gonzalez said.

The floating toilet which was developed by DHD engineers, consists of a pump flush sanitation facility and water effluent system.

The structure and waste treatment component are made of locally available materials such as bamboo, rope, wood, used plastic drums, lead cords, used steel drums, charcoal and gravel.

Three models

Three floating sanitary toilet models have been developed, costing P10,000, P25,000 and P50,000, respectively.

The first model, which is good for two persons, has a "digestion chamber" where human wastes are digested and "mineralized" or disposed of there.

A MODEL of the floating toilet put together by health officials who hope it could help solve sanitation problems in Bolinao and other areas in Pangasinan or where these toilets are needed.

The second and third models are equipped with digestion chambers where anaerobic (organisms living in the absence of air or oxygen) decomposition takes place.

The effluent then goes to a treatment chamber, which improves the quality of wastewater to standard levels, and eventually released into the water.

The second model is good for four to five people, while the third model is convenient and is even for four households.

Test site

Aquino said his office chose to launch the project in Bolinao because it was hard hit by last year's diarrhea outbreak. The town is also teeming with fish pens and cages.

"Besides, [Bolinao] Mayor Alfonso Celerio Jr. ... open to changes," Aquino said.

He said the floating sanitary toilet will be used to coordinate and supervision of the pens and cages and households along river banks and coastal areas.

"It's an inexpensive and readily accessible means of containing human waste from being directly disposed of into bodies of water, thus, preventing contamination," he said.

In the future, floating sanitary toilets can be used for commercial purposes, such as in floating restaurants or floating recreational facilities with some technology modifications, he said.

Mystery surrounds shooting, wounding of former mayor

Despite the testimony of a confessed participant pointing to the former mayor as the mastermind in the rape-slaying, a panel formed by the provincial prosecutor's office dropped the charges...

By Chito Chavez
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—MYSTERY surrounds the shooting and wounding of a former mayor of Dagami town on Tuesday, following a police decision to keep details of the case under wraps.

While police confirmed the shooting and wounding of Bonifacio Dumadion, former Dagami mayor, they refused to reveal more details.

"The investigation is ongoing," said Insp. Jelly Gilbert Bendo, Camp Dagohoy information officer, in a phone interview.

Bendo said members of the Dagami town police office proceeded to Barangay Bolod after receiving reports of the shooting near the Dumadion Beach Resort (2BR) at 2:30 p.m.

When they arrived at the area, Bendo said the policemen learned that Dumadion was one of those wounded in the shooting.

Another victim

He said Dumadion was rushed to the Governor Celestino Gallares Regional Hospital in Tacloban City for treatment.

Bendo confirmed that while Dumadion was being treated, another man identified as Teodoro Macalandag, 53, a resident of Barangay Tipay, Tagbilaran City, was brought to the same hospital.

"We were told that Macalandag was identified as one of those suspected of involvement in the shooting," said Bendo.

Bendo said Macalandag has been placed under police custody and being monitored round the clock.

He did not give details on the injuries suffered by Dumadion and Macalandag but police reports said Dumadion had a bullet wound in the back and Macalandag was injured in the right palm.

Dumadion was shipped to Cebu City later Tuesday afternoon for further treatment.

Guns, bullets

Bendo said a team from Camp Dagohoy in Tagbilaran City, including some of the other town police station (those), went to Bolod about 5:30 p.m. to investigate.

Police recovered from the crime scene a Glock 26 9-mm pistol with serial number DKS771 with a magazine loaded with nine bullets, two shotgun cartridges, one spent and one unfired bullet, six bullet casings and an unfired bullet of a .45 cal. pistol and two 12 gauge shotguns. The weapons belonged to Dumadion's bodyguards.

The Dagohoy police declined to give any statement saying Camp Dagohoy was handling the investigation. The Dagohoy investigation police office was the first in the scene.

Past cases

Dumadion served as Dagami mayor from 2004 to 2007 after serving as vice mayor to Mayor Benedicto Medelo from 2001-2004.

After losing to Dumadion in 2004, Abuda asserted revenge when he won in 2007 while serving high on Dumadion's alleged involvement in a rape-slaying case in 2004.

Despite the testimony of a confessed participant pointing to the former mayor as the mastermind in the rape-slaying, a panel formed by the provincial prosecutor's office dropped the charges against Dumadion and three others.

Then Antike Secretary Raul Gonzalez sustained the panel's recommendation on appeal.

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Tams try again, battle Falcons

By Jasmine W. Paya

STALLED IN ITS FIRST ATTEMPT FOR fourth again shoots for a Final Four berth against unpredictable Adamson in the UAAP men's basketball tournament today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Tamaraws try to bounce back in the 2 p.m. match four days after the University of the East Warriors spoiled their semifinal bid with an 87-72 rout.

That loss also trapped the Tamaraws' eight-game winning streak (although FEU 18-22) remains heavily favored over Adamson (3-7).

Defending champion Ateneo, with the first Final Four slot unfilled, hopes to boost its bid for one of the two twice-to-beat incentives against National at 4 p.m.

The Blue Eagles only need to stay out of their last four assignments to clinch the semifinal berth reserved for the top two teams after the eliminations.

"From the beginning, the goal was to make it to the top two," said Ateneo coach Norman Black. "We're happy to be in the final Four but we have to win a few more games before we reach our goal."

Ateneo	9 1
De La Salle	8 2
UP	6 3
UST	4 4
La Salle	4 5
NU	3 6
Adamson	3 7
Nationals	2 7

TODAY'S GAMES

(Araneta Coliseum)

11 a.m.—Adamson vs FEU

4 p.m.—Ateneo vs National

Ateneo pulled off an 80-70 triumph over University of Santo Tomas and grabbed the solo lead at 9-1 last Sunday when the Tamaraws lost to the Warriors.

"For us to win, we have to dictate the tempo and play good defense," said FEU mentor Glenn Capacio. "We need to go in the Final Four with a high level of confidence."

But the Tamaraws may be in for another rough match against the Falcons, who have already won two of their three games in the second round.

"It's a tall order versus FEU because they have a very deep bench," said Adamson coach Leo Austria. "We'll try our best to stop their scorers, especially (Mark) Barroca."

The Falcons showed they can keep up with the Tamaraws, who struggled before clinching a 63-60 decision in their first-round encounter on July 25.

"After the first-round, our wanted to wear all those heartbreaking losses," said Austria, whose Falcons dropped six early games by just an average of 2.8 points. "We just want to win every game."

Black is also shooting for his 400th win with the Eagles since taking over the coaching reins in 2005.

FEU'S Aldrich Ramos (right) will have to step up soon for the Tamaraws if they want to keep up with the Ateneo Eagles.

8 games for Texters in Serbia

By Mecong R. Castillo

THE TALK 'N TEXT TROPANG TEXTERS are scheduled to leave for Serbia on Sept. 1 for a series of practice games to get into tip-top shape for their title defense in the PBA Philippine Cup which tips off on Oct. 11.

The Texters, who burned the abaske team in last year's finals, expect to play eight games in 14 days against Serbian squads as they prepare for the tough PBA grind.

Coach Chot Reyes said they need all the edge they could get in the preseason since they will be playing with a virtual built-eye on their backs.

"Everyone will be coming after us and we have to be ready," Reyes said in jibes.

Save for Ato Bolanos, whom they acquired as a lopsided deal from Coca-Cola a couple of weeks ago, the Texters will have practically the same lineup for the coming season.

RP boxers Italy-bound

By Jane Meneses

FIVE OF THE NINE FILIPINO BOXERS who claimed the two weeks in Gallarate in Italy this Friday for the World Amateur Boxing Championships.

Ed Picson, executive director of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap), announced yesterday that two-time Olympian Harry Tafarose will harness the team in the world kingdom set Sept. 1 to 12 in Milan.

Joining Tafarose (light flyweight) are 2005 Asian Games gold medalist Juan Tipan (bantamweight), featherweight Cindy Soares, lightweight Jergin Ladon and light welterweight Gerardo Standfo.

Picson said the team was picked by coach Ito Gapi from a nine-man Abap squad that trained in Havana, Cuba, bankrolled by the Philippine Sports Commission.

Viloria hopes to lure fans back with title fight

By Dennis Principe, Contributor

WORLD LIGHT FLYWEIGHT CHAMPION Brian Viloria is confident the fight card he is headlining opposite Mexican Jesus "El Arel" Iribe will not end up in the red this coming weekend in the Blaisdell Center in Hawaii.

Hawaii newspapers have raised doubts about the ability of Viloria to fill up the venue as boxing has taken a backseat to Mixed Martial Arts in the island paradise.

"Boxing is but a memory here. A distant, fading one at that," star host Honolulu Advertiser columnist Ferd Lewis described the apex in one of his columns.

But the 28-year-old Viloria (25-2, 15 KOs) is unperturbed as he told the Inquirer about the buzz going with his return to Hawaii with only a few days before he defends his IBF light flyweight belt against Iribe (35-5-5, 19 KOs).

"Right now there are no big name fighters that come out to draw attention but hopefully that changes come Saturday (Sunday in Manila)," said Viloria in an overseas interview with the inquirer.

In the golden years of Hawaii fistic legends the Mts and '90s, the likes of Johnny Saluid, Ben Villaflor and Andy Ganigan, who all knew their ways in the Philippines, routinely filled some 3,000 seats of the 8,000-seater Blaisdell Center.

American manager Gary Gittelsohn points to the more than a dozen media obligations of Viloria as a sign that the card will do well at the gates.

"We're making sure we pay attention to Brian's training live at the same time are also trains to be sure he can come back for future fights by taking care of those obligations since Hawaii is his home, too," said Gittelsohn.

Part of the card dubbed "Island Assault" is another Philippines-Mexico faceoff between Celso Cacho AJ "Bazooka" Bassi against former WBC continental champion Jose Angel Becerra.

Brian must beware of easy target

JESUS RUIZ, WHO TURNS TO ASSIST HIM on Viloria's IBF light flyweight crown on Sunday, has been described by scouts as a strong, engaging fighter who loves to charge and do battle inside.

That augurs well for Viloria, says one veteran broadcaster who flew to Honolulu yesterday to be at ringside when the Hawaiian Punch defends his International Boxing Federation 108-pound crown.

Petras, agreeing with Iribe with contentions, could find a generous target in his Mexican foe, who lost by unanimous decision to reigning WBC light fly titlist Edgar Sosa last year.

* * *

The fight is extra significant to Viloria, not only because it marks the first defense of the crown he took from Mexican Ulises Solis.

It should also help complete his comeback that was flagged off with that unanimous 400 conquest of Solis at the Araneta Coliseum last April.

Of course, there's the danger of Viloria being suddenly lured into a wild slug-out.

Indeed against Solis, with a total of five knees, registered his 23 wins all by knockout, an awesome record.

International judge and boxing correspondent Salvio Lagumbay, however, offered correction and said it was only 9 KOs in 23 wins for Viloria's foe.

* * *

Anyway, if Viloria—who proved the last time that he indeed has his heart in the right place...would be strong enough to weather Iribe's grim assault, Brian could still score a win similar to what he achieved against Solis.

Viloria's outing against Iribe is actually one of several big fights lined up for the rest of the year wherein a lot of Pinoy pride will be at stake.

The ranks underneath to the Viloria-Iribe makes features the talented AJ Bassi, who is seeking a significant win after that shortening KO loss to Bonaventure Dalurd Concepcion in Cebu last year.

After smashing Concepcion par Nonito

BARE EYE

Recaib Trinidad

Donaire in a supreme test, critics moved to say that AJ Bassi was no duke-alike all.

AJ says just the contrary. Bassi, they added, has should be able to prove his mettle in time.

* * *

After AJ, it will be the turn of Boxers Bones Bautista, a protégé of esteemed Cebu sportsman Tony Aldeguer, to reappear and show fans he's far from finished.

Bautista's been lined up for a big outing at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel in October, philboxing.com reported.

There were also talks of return matches for both Rodel Mayol and Bernabe Concepcion.

After October, it will, of course, be the fight everybody has been talking about.

Count on Nov. 14, Manny Pacquiao puts for a record seventh world crown against Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto in Las Vegas.

Then, in December, expect Donaire to close out the busy Pinoy boxing calendar with a sensational fight, possibly against the flamboyant Jorge Arce, owner of the world super flyweight crown proper.

* * *

[EDITOR'S INCISIVE] Here's an announcement from lawyer Rony Macalintal: "People's Champ-Manny Pacquiao-will surely win again the hearts of lovers all over the world when they hear him read his poems. The champ taped three love poems—All I Can Give You Is Love, Please Believe Me, The Maids I Love You—from Luis Miranda of Inner Strength. Manny's poems will surely be a collector's item. I will announce when I will air his episode in my program 'The law of the heart is love' every Saturday from 8 to 9 p.m. over DzBB, 594.3 fm. For other details, text me your e-mail address at 09165014784."]

'Showdown' stayfest set at Pasay Cockpit

IT'S ONE MISS WEEK TO 13 GO BEFORE THE "SHOWDOWN 6-DRAG DERBY" UNFOLDS AT THE Pasay City Cockpit on Sept. 6.

The organizer offers a guaranteed prize of P400,000 for an entry fee of P5,888. As of yesterday, close to 100 game karera were slated by the screaming team.

Other participants may bring their rides on Sunday, Aug. 30 at the PCC office for screening. Please call 8250-9191, 8917-8271484 and 0929-1171103 for more info.

Red-hot Que, Pucay grab four-stroke WC qualifier lead

PETRONAS, JOHOR, MALAYSIA—THE Philippines produced a superb two-ball performance to take a commanding four-stroke lead after the first round of the Omega Mission Hills World Cup Asian Qualifier on Wednesday.

Mars Pucay and Angelo Que, both Asian Tour regulars, combined effectively for an 11-under par 60 to take a considerable lead over Singapore's Lam Chih Hwa and Mardan Mamat, who carried a 64 at the Seri Selangor Golf Club.

Malaysia's Danny Chia and late final and Hong Kong's David Freeman and Wang Jeha-Shin survived for the final OAD.

The top three teams after four rounds will qualify for the World Cup in China later in November.

Pucay and Que, who teamed up for the first time last year and finished in the top 10 in the World Cup, took 11 birdies—two of them chip-in birdies—on the 15th and 18th holes by Pucay.

Angelo had a rough putt on the 15th as I told myself I needed to sink my shot which I did. What I didn't know was that I would do it again on the next hole," said a delighted Pucay.

Que, a former veteran on the Asian Tour, is now taking their big lead lightly.

"We've got a four-shot cushion but it is only the first round, so nothing is confirmed. We are just going to stick to the game plan and keep making pars as that will be the key for this week," said Que.

Lam and Mardan, who last qualified for the World Cup in 2007, but it lacked gas, enjoyed an excellent front nine with six birdies but dropped a bogey on the 13th hole. But they bounced back with a birdie on the 16th hole and are now banking on their experience in team play's toughest format. (See tomorrow's tournament story, to catch the 9th spikers.

"The Philippines played awesome as we didn't think anyone would get as double digits, with some of the pins being the way they were," said Lam.

Mardan, who has played in three World Cups with Lam, conceded he wasn't at his best form.

"I didn't feel totally comfortable with the way I played," he said. "I need to sharpen up and put in a bit of practice time."

Mamat and Chia combined for six birdies against a lone bogey as they launched their bid to guide Malaysia in to their first World Cup in eight years.

First round scores: (a)—Philippines (a) Pucay, G. Que, -14—Singapore (Lam Chih Hwa, M. Mamat, (a)—Hong Kong (a) Freeman, Wang Wenn Shin, -9—Malaysia (a) Chia, C. Mamat, K.—Malaysia (a) S. Rahaji, (a)—Pakistan (a) Bukhti, M. Khatri (a)—Indonesia (a) Nasir, Sasongko, Bangkok (a) Ahmed, S. Ishmael, (a)—Algeria (a) C. Dakar, I. Umeh, (a) Lamin, Jassim, A. Ramzy

UM Hawks overwhelm Olympians

By Marc Anthony Reyes

UNIVERSITY OF MANILA LIMITED STI 90-31 points in the first half and rumbled to a 72-36 blowout win yesterday in the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Nasaac) basketball tournament at the Pasay Sports Complex.

Already in the Final Four with a 14-2 record, the Hawks flexed up their bid for a top two semifinal slot which comes with a twice-to-beat incentive.

The speedy rookie forward John Interbang rejoiced with 17 points on top of 14 rebounds and three blocks, while veteran Ryeon Edoserino turned in 16 points and eight rebounds for UM, which took a 42-21 lead at halftime.

It was the Olympians' 40th loss in 41 games, jeopardizing their bid to make the Final Four.

In other games, Informatics stayed in the hunt for a Final Four slot after downing Centro Escolar, 82-75, for its 10th victory.

But the Icons trimmed a half-game behind the fourth-running STI Olympians and need to sweep their three remaining games to get a chance to advance.

In the first game, also over Our Lady of Fatima University, 66-60, salvaged something from a gloomy season with a runner-hitting victory over AMA Computers, 74-69.

SEAN BECKA Ateneo's un rookie Justice Daniel blocks a reverse try by Ariel Mendoza of Emilio Aguinaldo.

Bombers crush Blazers behind Wilson heroics

By Cedelff Tupas

JOHN WILSON EXPLODED FOR 48 points yesterday and made everyone forget about his worst game of the season for Jose Rizal University.

Virtually unstoppable, Wilson powered Jose Rizal past St. Bonifide, 85-69, yesterday in the 40th NCAA basketball tournament at the HOM Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Wilson also pulled down 17 rebounds to complete the finest senior performance in current years and overshadow San Beda's 6-foot-6 sophomore Emilio Aguinaldo College in the second game.

"I guess, being a veteran, I'm supposed to play this way," said Wilson, who was coming off his worst outing of just five points in the victory over Perpetual Help last week.

"But, I didn't expect this to come out."

Wilson found his rhythm early, shooting 21 points in the first half, including 14 in the opening period.

Wilson's output was seven points short of the 54 All-season scoring record of former La Salle King Andrew Lim. Eng Beng, who set the mark of 55 points in a victory over Ateneo in the 1974 championship game. La Salle left the NCAA in 1981 and joined the SAAF 68, years later.

The Scores

Final Game

JRU 85—Wilson 48, Umali 15, Ogbi 10, Capco 8, Dino 3, Lazo 1, Quinco 0, Ngo 0, Mendo 0, Gabriel 0, Nangkil 0.

43 BONIFIE 69—Lo Quinto 22, Aduana 13, Mendoza 11, Ilos 8, Ngonso 7, Bustamante 6, Ambanto 0, Quinco 0, Lozada 0, Mendoza, 0, Tan 0, Aquino 0, Ando Dy 0.

Quarters: 20-19, 40-31, 58-51, 85-69

Second Game

SAN BEDA 86—Edwards 34, Lucero 12, Daniel 11, Castañeda 10, Dela Rosa 10, Manzanero, Cuevas 2, Lee 0, Tagaran 0, Tiongco 0, Pamilar 0, Zuleman 0, Dimaano 0, Villanueva 0.

EAC 83—Mendoza 34, Cuto 15, Quinto 13, Sapa 8, Pangi 7, Quinto 6, Abejuela 3, Chang 2, Lungo 1, L. Pagsi, Jadaan 0.

Quarters: 20-9, 43-35, 63-50, 86-83

PSC to dissolve national pool after SEA Games

By Jane Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION will resume all athletes from its payroll after the Southeast Asian Games in Laos.

PSC chair Harry Angping said the entire national pool will be dissolved to give way to a fresh wave of athletes, who will be trained to be highly competitive for future Asian-level meets and global tournaments such as the Olympics and world championships.

This means even the gold medalists of the Laos SEAG will have to prove their worth again.

Angping explained that the new pool of athletes will be identified through a regional tournament conducted by the PSC nationwide early next year with the help of the 42 national sports associations.

He said the PSC hopes to tap at least 2,000 to 3,000 promising athletes to provide depth for the national team.

"By doing this, an athlete cannot attest to be complacent because he knows that he can be replaced anytime," said Angping. "Every athlete has no choice but to fight for his slot in the national team," he added.

Angping said the concept is similar to China's sports programs where the best athletes for each discipline are picked from a horde of provincial aspirants who later shone in the national championships.

"We're tired of sending the same set of athletes to every international event," said Angping.

Last week, the PSC axed 62 former national athletes and four coaches from nine sports back to their mother units in the "revised version of the Philippine team."

Angping also reiterated that only the gold medalists of the 2007 Cebuan held in Thailand and potential gold winners will be banked on by the PSC in the Dec. 9 to 18 biennial meet in Vientiane.

Jungolf in Baguio

HEART, SOUL, SPORTS

ZENAIDY MANADAY

I HAD A VERY PLEASANT WEEKEND recently at the Baguio Country Club where my family stayed to celebrate my wife's birthday.

Though it was fully booked for the long weekend, the BCC was still able to maintain a very high quality of service. It was pleasing to see Japanese dog that it is an all-Filipino-run facility from top to bottom.

* * *

My wife was sick and its bed for two days but no one had the time of his life.

One may happened to coincide with the Jungolf tournament that was held at the short but tricky BCC course.

The Baguio Country Club allows its course to be used once a month on a weekend by Jungolfers from all over the country.

This may be a fine step in producing future golf champions from the North but, more importantly, it helps provide a healthy environment for the children on weekends to savor the fresh air and camaraderie with nature.

It is worth commending that this private club allows its golf course to be used on the last Sunday of the month by the youth.

In competitions, the Jungolf program in Manila is only active during the summer months due to lack of funding and support from the different clubs.

Despite this, we are still very competitive in the junior world series.

However, if we can increase the tournaments all year round and have the different clubs support them by lending their facilities on weekends when the children are free from school, we can hope to improve our performances.

With the recent results of the Puma Cup, we need to strengthen our Jungolf program so that it can contribute to our national team.

* * *

I am elated to hear and read that more people are now endorsing the game. Gilas hopes to take over from the PBA in representing the Philippines in the FIBA qualifying tournaments to the world championships and the Olympics.

I think many were convinced after seeing the PBA team fail in the recent China qualifying tournament, where the country sent an ill-prepared squad of professional superstars to do battle against the best teams in the region.

However, I feel that the Smart Gilas team will not make a big impact in the beginning because it will only be able to get one scrimmaged reinforcement and most of its local players will have no experience.

I think it would be wise for the Smart Gilas team to look at some of the young recruits of the PBA especially Japeth Aguilar and some veteran shooting guards who can fit into their system.

It is very difficult for shooting guards, who are 6-6th front, college and above to train for the annual experience of playing international, to be able to deliver the clutch shots down the stretch in high caliber tournaments.

We will need shooting guards to open up the defense of most international teams who play a lot of zone defenses.

Please send comments to zenaymanaday@yahoo.com

Puckett, Choi top Samsung Amateur Tour

BAGUIO—CLUB HIT HIGH PUCKETT FIRED impressive rounds of 71 and 68 to share top honors with Korean rookie Sinee Choi in the Samsung Amateur Tour at the mini-resident Camp John Hay course here.

Playing in Class A, Puckett's eagle-spiked second yesterday gave the senior player a 2-over par 140 total like championship division winner Choi and a three-stroke victory over William Kim.

Choi turned in a 71 for a 140, beating another Korean Bong Ho-bo by six strokes.

It was a clean sweep for the Koreans in the Indies division of the 36-hole tourney sponsored chiefly by Samsung Electronics Philippines Inc. as Soo Kun-pung, Lim Jihyun and Jung Jong-seon topped Class A, Class B and Class C, respectively.

Other sponsors were Mizuno, Cordilla, Canon Commodores, Silver Maple Ring, Consonance, Compal, Cosmos and APO Club for the hole-in-one sponsor while Camp John Hay Manor was the official host.

Puyat recovers with 69, gains US Am match play

TULSA, OKLAHOMA—MARGIL PUYAT shot a 1-under par 69 in the second round of the medal play qualifier of the US Amateur Golf Championship on Tuesday to barge into the match play stage at the Cedar Ridge Country Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The 18-year-old Puyat rebounded from an opening 75 Monday to finish tied for 20th place among 312 participants at 143 and safely survive the 64-qualifiers.

He shot three birdies in his opening round but was pulled down by five bogeys, a double bogey on hole No. 2 and a triple bogey seven on the 18th.

There are still four open slots which will be contested by 47 here, including 15-year-old US Junior champion Jordan Spieth. If Spieth does not qualify, Puyat will emerge the only junior golfer and youngest player in the tournament first played in 1895.

Puyat will face Harding Fernebaker, a rising senior at Jacksonville University and a consistent top 20 finisher in US amateur events, in the first round of match play Wednesday.

Tim Jackson, a 50-year-old veteran, teamed in an even par 140 and became the event's oldest low medal honoree.

Among the previous winners of the 103 Amateur were Tiger Woods, who won the first, two-time winner Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Phil Mickelson. The champion and runners-up get an automatic invitation to play in the US Masters, the US and British Opens as long as they keep their amateur status.

Puyat, who finished a three-over par 73 to collect a slot of pars at the finish to complete his 53-56 card in the second round.

PUYAT

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Want clean bay? Rid it of toxic waste

DepEd to blame for bay mess

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI Lapus says he's "sorry" DepEd has not been able to report to the Supreme Court what it was doing to clean up Manila Bay.

The high court, upon instigation by lawyers and environmentalist Tony Oposa, has asked several government departments to explain why they have not cleaned up Manila Bay despite its order given in December last year.

If there's one government agency that should get the biggest slice of the blame for the Pinoy's penchant of throwing trash into our rivers and seas and eating down trees to eat forests and mountains, it's the Department of Education.

The Department of Education has not educated the Filipino youth on the preservation of the environment.

Lapus' response to the high tribunal that environmentalism has long been integrated into the curriculum is not believable.

For how come school youth, from the elementary school to college, don't know how the whole ecosystem works?

If children had been made aware of the consequences of abusing the environment, they could have integrated that knowledge to their parents and elders.

* * *

The Philippines is one of the countries in the world without qualified personnel and not home-oriented.

People elect their leaders based on popularity; e.g., movie stars and broadcasters have an advantage over others.

Candidates are made to dance or do some funny antics on the campaign trail. There's final campaign stint: first senatorial candidate Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo danced the boogie with husband Mike on stage.

A candidate's merit or physical and psychological impediments, such as one being feeble, aged, are brought out by rivals during the campaign period.

And then political exercises no longer be very personal issues such as when former President Ramp branded his predecessor, Fidel V. Ramos, army boys (literally meddling like mad or about to die).

When will the Filipino voter ever mature?

* * *

I can say this of President Tabalos: He may be advanced in years but he's very healthy and strong.

He can outrun guys 20 years his junior.

I once jogged and ran with him at the Central Park in New York when he made a state visit to the US in the early 1990s and had a hard time catching up with him.

Even the US Secret Service agents assigned to secure FVR were hard put following him around in the park.

In between jog and run, he would have a pushup and abdominal exercises which his companions, including myself, had a hard time performing.

I still become fast runners in the bank that if Ping accepts PBN's challenge he dares to jog together from Makati ang to Pasay, Pasig—a distance of 57 kilometers...Jinp will be along the way.

* * *

Jeri Ramos, 61, may be older than Ping, 72, by nine years but PBN is 20 years younger than the former in terms of health and fitness.

* * *

Sen. Manny Villar tops the latest survey of presidential aspirants conducted by the reputable Pulse Asia.

Villar has the money and machinery to win the country's highest post.

Apparently, when the survey was made, Sen. Noynoy Aquino, son of democracy icon former President Cory and martyred Sen. Ninoy Aquino, was not included.

If Inquirer readers let pictures in the next survey, he will give Villar a run for his money.

Noynoy Aquino will be Villar's closest rival for the presidency should he decide to throw his hat into the ring.

Sen. Mar Roxas, who's Noynoy's mate in the Liberal Party, will just have to contest himself with the vice presidency since he's done in the surveys.

Eco group urges 'clean production' in companies alongside waterway

By Alexis Papa

TO SHOW ITS SERIOUSNESS IN CLEANING UP Manila Bay, the government should address the root cause of pollution in the bay, an environmental group said yesterday.

In a statement, Ibon Foundation Coordinator Sarah Raniza said the cleanup drive should include a drive on "clean production" in industrial and agricultural companies located alongside waterways that are linked to the bay.

Clean production, the explained, means "phasing out toxic materials to products and productive systems; finding cleaner, benign substitutes; and establishing individual systems for ensuring products that have reached their end-of-life."

Barangays should then set up "clean campaign" should include a phaseout of toxic materials in the manufacturing chain.

"Manila Bay is only the end of the whole pipeline of pollution coming from upstream commercial, factories and other contributors. We need to make clean production the working framework for production," she said.

Greenpeace toured the area, where after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the heads of government agencies to comply with a Supreme Court ruling for them to participate in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

On Monday, environmental lawyer and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Tony Oposa asked the high court to cite the government officials for contempt for their failure to submit a progress report on their roles in the cleanup every 90 days.

In his, only the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority have been able to comply with the court order.

"But the DENR should not be exempt from being made further accountable because pollution issues are a primary part of the DENR's mandate," Raniza pointed out. "What this case aspires is highlight the pollution of Manila Bay and the need to enforce environmental laws as well as a change [in our] attitudes and habits [toward the] environment."

Based on a 2006 survey conducted by Greenpeace, 95 percent of the garbage found in the bay were made of plastic materials. Of this percentage, 21 percent consisted of plastic bags, 19 percent were sachets and junk food packaging, five percent were made of styrofoam materials while one percent was foam [cylinder] materials.

She added that the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of Republic Act 9003 requires the "phasing of" non-environmentally acceptable packaging which could have helped address this problem.

"But the DENR has been remiss in its duties, such as removing the deadline for such provisions in RA 9003 which has been used [gone]," she said.

Bioregion also said that industrial and agri-chemical toxic wastes have found their way into the bay. "They are also a menace that should be turned as they are mostly toxic and dangerous to human health," she added.

DID YOU KNOW

In 1878, Spanish Minister Segismundo Moret ordered the secularization of the University of Manila Dentals and its renaming as the University of the Philippines. Dominicans strongly opposed the plan, which was later annulled by Moret's successor.

Cyril Jocelyn Inquirer Research

Ex-cop, 3 others held for car theft

POLICE YESTERDAY ARRESTED FOUR men, including a former policeman, for their alleged involvement in selling stolen and carnapped vehicles.

Director Rodeora Rosales, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said the police also seized from the four men nine suspected stolen vehicles in separate operations conducted between 12:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. yesterday.

Arrested were Christopher Pellagon, 33; Erlindo Ibida, 45; Louie Dayao, 35; and Rolando Quadros, 36, a former policeman.

Rosales said they had been monitoring the four men's movements through their intelligence network.

Prior to be arrested was Ibida who was caught selling cars covered by fake documents in a private lot in the parking lot of Casino Filipino at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

He later gave the police vital information which led to the arrest of his three cohorts.

Willie Catherine Calleja

4 Pasig houses razed

AN HOUR-LONG FIRE RAZED FOUR HOUSES in Pasig City yesterday morning, leaving dozens of people homeless and destroying P800,000 worth of property, authorities said.

No one was reported hurt in the fire which broke out at around 10:45 a.m. at 38 Gen. Lim Compound in Ymias, Barangay Rosario. It soared to a more second by Julio Lapid, a security guard, who was not home when the blaze occurred.

FO2 Salvador Mathews, the case investigator, said there was no evidence recovered so far that would indicate what caused the fire. "We still need to talk to the occupant of the room to determine what happened," he said. At top

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Bomb kills 40 in Afghanistan

KANDAHAR—RESCUE WORKers on Wednesday sifted through the rubble of the shopping district in Afghanistan's southern city for a 24th victim of a powerful car bomb explosion that killed at least 40 people and wounded 80, almost all civilians.

The force of the explosion shattered windows and brought down buildings, trapping people under the rubble as they were breaking their Ramadan fast, Gen. Ghulam Ali Wahidi, the southern police zone commander, told AFP.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. The militia, which ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until the 2001 United States-led invasion, rarely bothers to exaggerate their claims as well as deny attacks involving civilian casualties.

"Our current death toll is a total 40 to 45 people have been killed and over 60 other people have been wounded," Wahidi told AFP.

Afghan and foreign forces worked off the site in the terrible blast, which was the 6th Taliban explosion in Kandahar in the last 7 months.

Rahid called in his security officials shortly after Tuesday's attack and ordered a thorough investigation of the incident and the arrest of "those responsible as soon as possible," Tolo Khaama said.

The attack happened less than two hours after the independent Election Commission in Kabul announced the first results from the hotly contested election held last Thursday between a threat of Taliban-backed threat.

Taliban had pledged to disrupt the poll, the second of its kind in the history of Afghanistan's wars on the path to a Western-sponsored democracy.

Although the West praised election day for taking place amid less violence than expected, officials said there were more than 300 incidents ranging from small explosions to rocket attacks and gun battles that killed 26 people.

After less than nine months, 2009 is also now on record as the deadliest year for foreign troops in the country since the US-led invasion.

Partial results from the ballot released on Sunday showed Karzai—who is from Kandahar province—with a two percentage point lead over his main rival, former foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah.

Figures released to AFP by Karzai's campaign office, published from polling stations by his representatives, put him on track to win between 55 and 62 percent of the vote.

The Karzai office figures show total turnout at less than 5.5 million out of registered voters numbering between 15 million and 17 million.

Analysts have said that such low turnout—one of the aims of the Taliban intimidation campaign—could raise questions about the legitimacy of the victor and possibly lead to widespread unrest.

The rank and mob race between the two increasingly bitter rivals has been tainted with claims of fraud and ballot stuffing, most of it in favor of Karzai, whose camp has been claiming victory since shortly after polls closed. AFP

R&B singer Chris Brown sentenced for assault

LOS ANGELES—SINGER/ACTOR Chris Brown was sentenced to five years' probation and 180 days of community labor on Tuesday for beating up his then girlfriend, pop singer Rihanna.

The sentencing in a Los Angeles judge followed a plea deal.

Brown, 20, pleaded guilty to assault on June 22. As part of his sentence, he must also complete a one-year domestic violence counseling program.

He assaulted Rihanna during an argument that began in the small hours of Feb. 8, with the couple, seen as a model Los Angeles. The assault left the 21-year-old singer bloodied and bruised, and stunned Brown's fans. But a probation report issued on Tuesday showed the couple had reconciliated.

Three months before the Los Angeles incident, Brown showed Rihanna footage of a letter she slapped him during an argument.

About two months later, another argument in a vehicle led to Brown smashing the window, according to the report.

He was originally supposed to be sentenced earlier this month, but Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patricia Schnegg gave court officials more time to ensure that Brown's punishment would involve plenty of work.

Brown will be able to perform his community labors—mowing highway medians, litter removal or other work—in Virginia, where he lives. He will also be allowed to attend a domestic violence counseling program in that state.

As part of the sentence, Schnegg also ordered Brown to stay at least 50 meters away from Rihanna, unless they are both attending an entertainment industry function, when the minimum would be lowered to 10 yards. Reuters

BROWN

Dutch teen in battle to sail solo around globe

THE HAGUE—THIRTEEN-year-old Laura Dekker wants to become the youngest person to sail solo around the world, and her parents think that's a good idea.

But the Dutch Council for Child Protection is not convinced about the dangers of the marathon voyage it has asked a court to quash. A hearing previously set for August 31 was moved to Sept. 16 after the parents refused to halt the trip.

Judges at Utrecht District Court were to announce on Friday whether they will stop per Laura's record-breaking plans. In the meantime, the legal battle is the latest in a series surging debate over when the youth of today reaching certain milestones. Do 16-year-olds have the right to drive cars? Should 18-year-olds be able to drink alcohol? Is 13 old enough to have sex?

The current debate centers on the question of when parents should give in to their children's risky adventures.

The current debate centers on the question of when parents should give in to their children's risky adventures.

The current debate centers on the question of when parents should give in to their children's risky adventures.

BAITULLAH Mehsud

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Querijero

Pakistani Taliban confirm death of leader Mehsud

DERA GHAZI KHAN—TWO PAKistani Taliban commanders have acknowledged that top leader Baitullah Mehsud is dead, saying he died 10 days after a United States missile strike and disputing reports that the al-Qaida-linked movement he led lacked a ruling spirit.

In a joint phone call on Tuesday to The Associated Press, Wakir Rehman and Hakimullah Mehsud confirmed an earlier Taliban announcement that the latter was the new Pakistani Taliban chief. Hakimullah Mehsud, 28, is considered a hotheaded, ruthless militant who might have problems keeping the Taliban united, but Tuesday's call signaled that he is solidly in charge for now. AP

Globe participates in the biggest triathlon event Ironman 70.3 Philippines

A team of Globe employees will be joining the highly-anticipated triathlon Ironman 70.3 Philippines happening on August 23 in Cagayan de Oro. This inaugural event will yield the top 30 triathletes who will join leagues in the Ironman 70.3 Championship in Florida.

As it aims to encourage sports among Filipinos, Globe is also supporting the Ironman 70.3 Philippines.

Endorsement continues to rise as the World Triathlon Corporation and its Ironman Race Series take on the Philippines on Sunday. Triathletes from all over the world rose to the Cagayan Water-sports Complex in Piñahan to endure the 1.2km swim, 90.1km bike ride and 21.1km run.

Seen as the biggest triathlon event in the country, Ironman 70.3 Philippines has more than 600 athletes that will be brought over 7.4 hour sports event that will be attended by thousands.

During the event, Globe has set up a booth where anyone can get free Ironma tattoo and have their pictures taken to upload in their favorite social network sites. The Ironmania tattoo pictures will win Globe broadband Tattoo Prepaid Kits.

Another attraction is the Ironman 70.3 Philippines Globe Prediction and SMS Lineup. To participate, Globe customers should text IRONMAN 70.3 Philippines and SEND to 2345. Globe Team members will predict the finishers of Ironman 70.3 Philippines and their corresponding finishing time. Those who will correctly predict the top 3 finishers will win Globe prepaid loads worth P1,000 each.

Globe subscribers can also participate in the Ironman 70.3 Philippines Globe Prediction and SMS Lineup. To participate, Globe customers should text IRONMAN 70.3 Philippines and SEND to 2345. Globe Team members will predict the finishers of Ironman 70.3 Philippines and their corresponding finishing time. Those who will correctly predict the top 3 finishers will win Globe prepaid loads worth P1,000 each.

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CIA torture tactics probe draws fire

WASHINGTON—THE US JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S probe of alleged abusive interrogation techniques by CIA agents drew fire on Tuesday from critics who said the probe is not wide enough, while others warn of a long and arduous process.

Interrogators are alleged to have used a range of techniques, including physical threats, mock executions, strangulation to the point where detainees lost consciousness and even using a stiff brush to scrub a detainee's skin raw.

But despite the shocking details revealed in the 2004 CIA inspector general's report released on Monday, opinion is divided about the investigation, with some believing it should be broader in scope and others convinced that any investigation will be damaging.

"Despite your assurances that this investigation will be narrow and focused, there is a real risk that today's announcement portends a long, arduous, and unpredictable process for the intelligence community," a group of senior Republican senators wrote in a letter to Holder on Monday.

They warned that the investigation "would, among other things, have a chilling effect on the work of the intelligence community." Former vice president Dick Cheney, a fierce defender of the war on terror tactics, weighed in to defend the interrogation program as "cliently responsible" for preventing another large-scale al-Qaida attack on the United States.

The administration's actions, he said, were "a reminder, if any were needed, of why so many Americans have doubts about this administration's ability to be responsible for our nation's security." Attorney General Eric Holder announced on Monday he had named assistant US attorney John Durham to review the CIA interrogations of detainees at secret sites overseas to determine whether any laws were broken.

But Durham will be limited in examining whether there is sufficient evidence to charge individual agents with violating the special interrogation rules they were given after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Human rights groups and other critics insisted the probe should also look at the actions of the senior officials in the Justice Department and the former Bush administration who authorized a regime of harsh interrogations.

The American Civil Liberties Union, which filed lawsuits seeking the public release of the CIA report, called for "a full investigation into the torture of prisoners and those who authorized it." AFP

THE LOWEST RATE--EVER AND A MILLION MILES UP FOR GRABS!

Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard Boosts Its Miles-earning Program With The Lowest Point-to-Mile Rate Offer at P30!

JULY 20, 2009, Allied Bank Center, Makati – A new promo rises off with a double-edged cocktail of advantages for valued cardholders.

The Lowest Point-to-Mile Ever Offered

"It's a truly rare 'B' the fulfillers, but are can complete it as very distinctive treat," says Fe C. Siaw, Jr., senior vice president and head of the Credit Card Department of Allied Bank. "That is why we made the most-sought-after miles credit card in the country at an unprecedented low rate of only P30 per mile."

On processing on the P30/Mile offer runs 1.5 mile and of the soon Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard starts to fill up to 10 times Miles accounts.

From July 20 through December 31, 2009, cardholders earn on a mile ticket for every P1,000 single receipt purchase. All their accumulated miles will then be effected in their monthly statements for inclusion.

A Million Thanks in a Million Miles

"At Allied, the big Mabuhay Miles is the prize," said Siaw. "And we wanted to reward our Filipino cardholders who, in many ways, a total of one Million Kilometer Miles in 30 lucky winners, 20 of which will win 50,000 and one Grand Prize winner of 100,000 Kilometer Miles."

Mr. Siaw continues, "It give you a little less the same number, 30,000 Miles is the same as how much miles in many things or these round trips to the domestic destinations. 100,000 Miles would have round trips of the US or round trips to Hawaii, countries like Singapore, Singapore or Jakarta. That, translated into local destinations, is like going on 10 round trips on Philippine Airlines."

A Bank To All New Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard Applicants

But on the left behind are new cardholders. All approved applications that fall within the promo period shall receive 30 in credits bonus as welcoming.

For more information call Ally Live Customer Service at 818-9-818 with domestic toll free 1800-10-818-9-818 or log on to http://cards.alliedbank.com.ph and www.mabuhaymilesmastercard.com.

We Also Inspire. "We want our new cardholders to get a good experience so that they can maximize their mile accumulation and truly experience it being a true Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard cardholder. We promise they cannot be disappointed," Siaw said.

What's more, applicants for any Allied Bank credit card from July 15 to October 15, 2009, get a free Carry-Roll bag upon activation and use.

And Still More Up Ahead

"The acceptance from our valued cardholders has been tremendous through the years, and all this is to thank them for their patronage," Mr. Siaw said. "As we speak, our company is cooking up yet other ways to keep them satisfied. It's always been fun, and we are promise... And we're definitely here to keep it."

ALLIED BANK

Mabuhay Miles

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- Exports seen posting growth in 2010 /B3

Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Nariona

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
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- Toyota cuts capacity amid sales slump /B5

Philamlife to acquire 51% of Ayala Life

Joint venture with BPI to boost bancassurance operations

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE AMERICAN LIFE AND GENERAL INSURANCE Co. (Philamlife) has entered into a deal to acquire a 51-percent stake in the Ayala Group's life insurance business to form a formidable bancassurance venture with local banking giant Bank of the Philippine Islands.

The biggest and most profitable insurance company in the country, a crown jewel that was earlier put up for grabs by the American International Group, has turned into an acquirer of a majority stake in BPI subsidiary Ayala Life Assurance Inc. (Ayala Life).

Under an agreement announced yesterday, Ayala Life will serve as the platform for BPI and Philamlife's strategic bancassurance partnership.

"This partnership is a direct result of our strategy to focus on the core life insurance and wealth management busi-

PHILAMLIFE B2

Currencies

source: PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱48.71/$1

as of 5 p.m., Aug. 26, 2009

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B3)

Stocks close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.16-PERCENT higher yesterday, boosted by property issues and excess liquidity, dealers said.

The composite index added 0.38 points to 2,863.43, while the all-shares index rose 0.37 percent or 5.76 points to 1,547.30.

Heavy turnover—save 2.46 billion shares worth ₱20.47 billion changing hands with 87 issues up, 26 down and 57 unchanged.

The peso traded at 48.87/$1 in the dollar in morning trade.

"The stock market will stay resilient as fixed-income returns remain at unacceptable levels. The low interest rate environment is also helping property stocks," Evelio Bulla of SB Capital told Dow Jones Newswires.

After yesterday's gains, Emmanuel Dollar of Lucky Hybrid Securities said the index was tipped to correct in the near term.

"There's downside risk because local stocks went up significantly from last week on a lot of selling pressures are being felt right now," Dollar said.

Property issues took center stage, with Megaworld up 3.67 percent to ₱1.54 and Filinvest Land adding 4.08 percent to ₱1.02.

PLDT dropped 0.5 percent to ₱2,630, tempering the market's advances. —BVF

SSS overshoots revenue targets for 1st half

By Bernard N. Dionisio

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM should not unravel that the pension fund will remain viable in the next few decades and be able to provide benefits and pay out claims.

Ronaldo L. Iñiri, SSS president and chief executive, said yesterday that contributions collections in the first semester exceeded benefit disbursements by ₱658 million.

"This means SSS has consistently posted a surplus of contributions over benefits since 2000," Iñiri said.

He said that before 2000, SSS benefit payments had repeatedly outpaced contributions collections.

The official explained that a surplus meant an assurance to members that SSS remained strong and financially stable despite the effects of the global financial crisis on the domestic economy.

"SSS will be around for the next 50 years or longer," he said. "There is nothing to worry about so far."

According to Iñiri, total revenue from January to June reached ₱47.48 billion, or 3 percent higher than the target of ₱46.35 billion.

However, this was a 20-percent drop from the year-ago level of ₱53.17 billion.

The reduction in total revenue was attributed to lower investment income, which reached only ₱11.18 billion or 41.6 percent lower than last year's ₱19.07 billion.

However, income on investments for the first half was 28.9 percent higher than the target of ₱9.20 billion.

Contribution collections reached ₱36.3 billion, surpassing both the target of ₱36.4 billion and the ₱36.1 billion in the first half of 2008.

Taking out operation expenses and benefit disbursements, SSS posted a net revenue of ₱6.37 billion in the first half.

This was only half of the ₱16.75 billion generated a year ago, but was 66.3 percent higher than the goal of ₱4.101 billion.

"SSS has remained a reliable source of social security protection," Iñiri said. "SSS has paid a total of ₱53.63 billion in benefits for the first half, which is 7 percent more than what was disbursed in the same period last year."

SSS to maximize value of 22% stake in Philex

By Norman W. Domingo

THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM may sell its 22-percent stake in publicly listed Philex Mining Corp. in mid-2010 as the members seek to maximize the value of its shares.

SSS president Romulo L. Neri said yesterday the pension fund was indeed in talks with Ion Miguel Corp. president Ramon S. Ang but that it was "nothing serious."

Asked subsequently to make insight take place, Neri said it could be in the middle of next year, adding that "probably, SSS would be under a new administration by then."

"But we are not closing our doors," he said. "Of course, SSS assets are for sale but the right price."

Neri said the Philex shares were not to be sold for now because these were too many good developments related to the mining firm.

"There is the oil find in Surigao and the potential gas deposit near Malampaya," he said. "The gold and copper mine in Surigao seems very promising."

"There seem to be reliable information about Philex's prospects that, when developed, would drive up the [P]rices of the shares," he added.

Neri said SSS would hold on to the Philex shares and wait "maybe a year or even two" to maximize the potential of the price.

Last June, Texas-based oil and gas exploration firm Philex Petroleum Corp. in which the Philex group has a 22.5-percent stake, announced the completion of drilling operations at the Tai Reong Do (Red Emperor) discovery well in offshore Vietnam.

Philex, through its wholly owned subsidiary Vietnam American Exploration Co. LLC, is part of a group that is searching for petroleum in an area called Block 07/03 under a production sharing agreement.

Drilling at a depth of 3,810 meters encountered a 90-meter thick of multiple oil and gas reservoir layers, two of which had been tested.

The two reservoir zones yielded oil at a combined flow rate of 3,268 bpd with 6 million standard cubic feet of gas a day.

No water was produced from either zone, indicating potential commercial quantity of the hole.

Philex said drilling for a second exploration well elsewhere on the area called Block 07/03 is planned for the fourth quarter of 2009.

Block 07/03 covers 4,915 square kilometers of the Nam Con Son Basin—itself considered a prospective region by petroleum—and is adjacent to Block 12W, which is known for the Chim Sao and Dua oil fields.

Sale may happen in mid-2010

PSE sets road shows in Tarlac, Baguio

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) will conduct road shows in Tarlac and Baguio next month to drum up interest among provincial retail investors on the equities market.

After the Tarlac-Baguio road show, the PSE will visit the cities of Dumaguete and Davao in October and December, respectively.

The next free stock market investing seminar will be held on Sept. 1 at the La Mallorca Hotel in Tarlac and on Sept. 3 at the Baguio Country Club in Baguio City from 1 to 5 p.m., the exchange announced yesterday.

"This activity forms part of PSE's intensified investor education program to increase local participation in the stock market. Through this financial literacy campaign, the exchange also hopes to promote the stock market as an effective venue for mobilizing capital for business enterprises outside Metro Manila," PSE president and chief executive officer Hans Sicat said.

The PSE said he joined by experts who will talk about the basics of stock market investing, online stock trading, investing in mutual funds and listing on the PSE.

The new road shows followed a successful provincial briefing in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, last March and in Cebu last June.

The PSE financial literacy campaigns in Laguna and Cebu were well received by the participants who were mostly individuals with high net worth, including corporate executives, professionals and entrepreneurs. The road shows also gathered participants from the government, the academe and the various business clubs in the nearby provinces. Doris C. Dumlao

PT&T group placed under court rehab

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MAKATI REGIONAL TRIAL Court has placed the cash-strapped Pietrobon group of companies, which includes publicly listed Philippine Telegraph & Telephone Corp., under a court-assisted rehabilitation, thus giving the group relief from creditor claims.

In a ruling dated Aug. 24, Makati City RTC Branch 66 presiding Judge Aurelio Villa issued a "stay" order on all claims, whether by money or otherwise, against the petitioners and its guarantors and sureties. Appointed as receiver was Pamela Barbara Quinto-Labayen.

Under the "stay" order, the assets of the Pietrobon group are protected from dissipation as the owners cannot sell, encumber or dispose anything except in the ordinary course of business.

The petitioners are Republic Telecommunications Holdings Co., PTKI, Philippine Wireless Inc., Capitol Wireless Inc. and Telecoms Philippines Inc. Pietrobon owns 97 percent of PTKI, 60 percent of PWI and 70 percent of CWI.

In its ruling, the court said it "is assured that the interests of the Pietrobon group are protected from dissipation as the owners cannot sell, encumber or dispose anything except in the ordinary course of business."

Exports seen posting growth in 2010

By Michelle V. Rerre

THE EXPORT SECTOR, BATTERED BY the slump in global demand since last year, is expected to start posting modest growth in earnings next year, Deutsche Bank said.

Norbert Walter, chief economist of the Deutsche Bank Group who was in Manila yesterday, said in a briefing that the world economy would "marginally" recover next year after bottoming out this year. As a consequence, he said, the Philippines and other emerging economies might already see slight growth in export earnings in 2010.

"Economies are getting better because of very active central banks and stimulus packages implemented by governments. Most of the effects of the stimulus measures will be felt next year," Walter said.

Global demand to start picking up

Walter said demand for consumer goods—including consumer electronics like cellular phones, personal computers, laptops, among others—was expected to pick up next year as consumers around the world start to increase spending with the feared economic gridlock over.

The Philippines is expected to benefit from the likely rise in global demand for consumer electronics, as the bulk of its export revenues comes from semiconductor electronic goods that are used to produce things like cellular phones and computers.

Walter said, however, that the growth in export revenues next year would be minimal, as global recovery would be measly as well.

"After the recession, the world will not go back to registering growth rates prior to the crisis," he said. For instance, he said, while consumption in the United States would improve a bit, American households are not expected to return to their old practice of credit spending. This will mean demand from the US, a major export market, will grow minimally.

Walter said other countries that plunged into recession, such as those in Europe, were also expected to grow next year but not substantially.

The Philippine export sector has been contracting since last but year with the spreading of the ramifications of the biggest markets, the US and Europe.

Philippine exports fell 32.8 percent to $17 billion in the first half of the year.

The seismic exports woes were partly blamed for the country's slower economic growth in the first quarter, the economy grew by only 0.4 percent, the slowest pace in 18 years. Exports account for about 29 percent of the economy.

Walter said that in 2010, Philippine exports could already post a low, single-digit growth rate.

He said the projected rebound in exports would help the Philippines accelerate its economic growth rate to 4 percent. This year, the government expects the economy, measured in terms of gross domestic product, to grow by between 0.8 and 1.8 percent.

Walter said growth in domestic demand might also accelerate next year, although not dramatically, with the likely pickup in economic activity.

SMC bags Limay power plant

By Amy R. Remo

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT SAN MIGUEL Corp. has bagged the 600-megawatt Limay combined cycle power plant in Bataan with a bid of $115.3 million, according to Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

PSALM said the offer of SMC energy investment arm San Miguel Energy Corp. (SMEC) exceeded the government's reserve price for the closed-door facility.

PSALM is expected to declare SMEC as the winning bidder as soon as the autonomy, authenticity and completeness of all the submitted bid documents are checked and verified by the PSALM board.

The successful negotiated sale was the fourth attempt of PSALM to privatize the Limay plant.

The power facility remained unsold after two auctions held in July 2008 and January 2009, and negotiations held in March 2009 due to lack of investor interest.

Commissioned in 1993, the Limay plant has one 313-MW modules—one component of three 90-MW gas turbines and another with a 130-MW steam turbine. It is designed to meet the base load demand of the Luzon grid.

The plant was being sold on an "as is, where is" basis with no power supply contract attached, as it operates only to provide of peak demand. The new owner would therefore have to sell the plant's output through the wholesale electricity spot market.

PSALM said it would continue to pursue the government's power asset sale program, even if it had already breached the crucial 70-percent privatization level, which was one of the preconditions to the declaration of open access and retail competition.

Claim does not pay

I KNOW I KNOW—YOU OFTEN HEAR some loudmouths decrying that the country owes less the use of aerial spraying of low-dose fungicide in banana plantations in Mindanao.

As you know, all the banana-producing countries in the world use the same aerial spraying to control a deadly banana plant disease caused by a certain fungus.

It so happened that our banana industry cannot compete against all those countries. Again, "compete" is the operative word.

That, unfortunately, our banana industry cannot do, if we give in to the whim of these loudmouths. Why? Because the cost of controlling the fungus will increase tremendously.

It will mean the death of the entire banana industry, which employs some 100,000 highly paid workers directly, not to mention the ripple effects that it creates in the entire economy.

What is utter silence the supposed "issues" of these loudmouths is that the latest "scientific" survey showed that this country has only close to 40 percent incidence of poverty.

With a total population of 91 million, we have an amazing 45 million poor people. And we still want to add to these by killing an entire industry literally!

* * *

I GUESS there is hope. The Department of Health has come out in the open to deny its role in a suspicious "study" that recommended the ban.

(I was confronted via a small text in a small barangay in a small town in one of the 13 provinces in Mindanao producing bananas.

Supposedly, a research team of the UP National Poison Management and Control Center, plus the Philippine Society of Clinical and Occupational Toxicology, conducted the study.

Here is what a National Health Inspector, Dodoy Jean Pinal-Ubial, who was in charge of the banana region in Mindanao prior to her promotion, has to say:

"I study on one small community alone was not enough ground to make a conclusion that aerial spraying should be banned."

"It must have a basis for comparison."

You know—a health study on the people in an area he from aerial spraying, versus a health study on the people in an aerial spraying area. You know—a scientific SOP. That, of course, the research team forgot to do!

And yet the DOH, which commissioned the study, wanted it to prove or disprove some claims made by one single person about the evils of aerial spraying, done apparently with funding support from outside the country, the study having been peddled as vox

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Bawal III

populi vox dei (which is Latin for "voice of the people is the voice of God").

The DOH welcome secretary to officers to saying that the study failed to support or debunk such claims.

This is one experienced DOH official talking, and we just note loudmouths!

* * *

THE STILL UNVERIFIED claim against aerial spraying was that nearly 400 people—again, unverified numbers—suffered from skin and other diseases due to exposure to aerial spraying.

Worst of all, according to the unverified claim...people died.

The Philippine Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA), which is the lead organization of the banana industry, has been insisting that those "cases" were merely fabricated.

Here is what PBGEA spokesperson Isabelo Lim has to say about the claim:

"Those reported to have died, turned out in all alive.

"Some allegedly afflicted with skin diseases had their condition years before they came to the banana plantations."

What is more, according to Isabelo, the PBGEA has already documented—i.e. "evidenced"—that the claims were nothing but lies.

* * *

THE DOH now declares that it did not have anything to do with the "health" study and the DOH employees merely accompanied the researchers from UP.

Apparently to prevent similar lapses in the future, the government set up a program called the Philippine National Health Research System, or PNHRS.

It gets Isabelo Rom, aside from the DOH, the Department of Science and Technology, Commission on Higher Education and the UP Manila National Institutes of Health.

The PNHRS states that its aims to come up with health policies that are based on actual scientific research—and not, as these vendors of lies—officials—"simply based on tradition thought."

The PNHRS that encourages local governments to submit proposals for scientific studies on health problems in their areas.

The DOH can then use those studies as basis for policies and ordinances.

According to Antonio Lopez, chair of the PNHRS research agenda committee, researchers known for their bias need not apply. They are automatically disqualified. Whew!

* * *

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy filed charges against 28 LPG companies.

Just so you know, the companies are: OnGas, Savers Gas, Oil Ink, Gas Plaza, Liberty Gas, Jesi Petroleum, Duty Plastic, RS Marketing, Ruech General Merchandise, Dimaanyod Trading, PES Gas, Once Flame Gas, RPRM Gas Marketing, Angel Gas, Very Gacho Biaz, Oil Link International, Bolilao LPG Dealers, Hemin Gas, DH Sterlaga Gas, Savery Gas, Northern Gas, Crest Gas, Tobias Marketing and New Pron Ara Gas.

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Holcim to reopen suspended production line in November

By Abigail L. Ho

CEMENT MANUFACTURER HOLCIM PHILIPPINES Inc. will resume operations of the second production line in its Lugait, Misamis Oriental, plant in November.

The line was suspended in July last year due to weak market demand.

According to the company, demand has significantly picked up in 2009, with "record sales volumes" registered in the past months, driven by the infrastructure and low-cost housing sectors.

Holcim said various increased areas all of its manufacturing plants in the country particularly those in Mindanao where a number of major road projects were underway.

The company currently has a 1,500-strong workforce in its La Union, Bulacan, Davao and Misamis Oriental cement plants. Its three plants, there are four operating production lines due to each of the first three. It also has non-operating lines in the latter, Davao and Misamis Oriental.

"We recognize that the government is hard at work, pump-priming the economy with infrastructure projects, and we want to make sure that we are able to continue supporting this initiative," Holcim Philippines chief operating officer Ian Thackeray said in a statement yesterday. "By operating a second line in Lugait, we ensure that there continues to be sufficient market supply."

While the company's forecast for the industry in 2010 is similarly conservative, he said the operating of the Lugait line would give the cement firm more flexibility to support any incremental growth.

"As of now, market demand remains strong and there are no indications, as yet, of any slowdown," he said.

Davao it would take two to three months to get a production line started, he said the outlook that the second Lugait line could start operating again as in November.

This line would remain in operation as long as there was sufficient demand, he said.

"Market forces determine when it makes economical sense to operate certain facilities, but we are committed to maintain our facilities and, equally important, retain our people," he said. "We recognize that job loss has far-reaching consequences, affecting not just the employees' families, but also the communities where they reside."

He said the suspension of the Lugait line in July 2008 did not result to any job loss. Those involved in that line's operations were either ranked to maximize the line or deployed in other operating areas.

FLI taps retail bond market

By Doris C. Dumlao

TYCOON ANDREW GOTIANUN'S PROPERTY development arm, Filinvest Land Inc., plans to raise as much as P5 billion from the retail bond market next quarter, taking advantage of the ample liquidity in the domestic financial market.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, FLI said its executive committee had approved a plan to raise this amount from public offering of three- and five-year fixed-rate debt securities before the end of the year.

"The proceeds of the issue will be used by FLI or Bonave in capital requirements in 2009 and 2010," the disclosure said.

The issue date is targeted within the fourth quarter of the year, subject to the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

FLI provides a wide range of real estate products—socialized, affordable, middle-income and high-end residential lots and housing units, medium-rise residential buildings, condotels, industrial parks, leisure developments such as farm estates, a residential resort development and a private membership club.

Its wholly-owned subsidiaries are Property Maximizer Professional Corp., Property Specialists Resources Inc., HomePro Realty Marketing Inc. and Leisurepro Inc.

FLI is also involved in a number of joint ventures through Filinvest Asia Corp., Cyberzone Properties Inc. and Filinvest 40 Philippines Inc.

The local retail bond market has been very active this year, allowing blue chips to raise funds in this segment. A record-high P70 billion worth of retail bonds were issued in the first half of the year.

Theme: Enhancing Entrepreneurship of Agriculture and Fisheries Through Technology Commercialization
5TH AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES
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US economy rebound seen but worry remains

Sustained government stimulus sought to ensure growth

WASHINGTON—THE US ECONOMY is bouncing back more robustly than expected from its worst recession in 70 years, economists said in a poll on Thursday, and US regional manufacturing rose, but worry remained about a "double-dip" recession still seemed growth followed by another contraction.

Officials in Germany and Japan expressed doubt on the global economy's strength, adding to worries that emerging growth may falter without sustained government stimulus.

US growth is expected to return to the course quarter while economic bellwethers such as Germany, Japan, France and Hong Kong already have emerged from recession, leading markets to rise and governments to consider winding down stimulus programs.

There were reports earlier around the uneven nature of the US economic recovery.

Manufacturing in the US Mid-Atlantic region expanded in August, snapping a 16-month streak of contraction to reach its highest point since November 2007 and cement even the most optimistic forecasts, the Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank said.

The index of leading economic indicators, which is supposed to forecast US economic trends six to nine months ahead, rose in July for a fourth straight month, according to Conference Board, a private research firm.

But a report from the US Labor Department illustrated the fragile state of the jobs market. Initial applications for state unemployment insurance benefits unexpectedly rose 11,000 to a seasonally adjusted 576,000 last week, tempering some of the optimism.

US stocks rose on the back of a rally in Asian and European markets.

After shrinking by 1 percent in the second quarter and by an annualized rate 6.4 percent in the first quarter, US gross domestic product will grow 2.4 percent in the current quarter and 2.2 percent in the final three months of the year, according to a sample of around 73 economists in a Reuters poll.

The recovery is more expected to be stronger than economists previously last month, when they saw growth of 0.8 and 1.8 percent in the third and fourth quarters, respectively.

High unemployment, which the poll showed topping out at 10 percent, and a massive debt load are the shoulders of consumers will drag the economy after the initial recovery. The economists forecast a 25 percent chance of a "double-dip" recession.

"Many data suggest that the economy is near a bottom, but the recovery is likely to prove to be lengthy, gradual and fragile," said Scott Brown, chief economist with Raymond James & Associates in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Reuters polls on 127 economists also showed analysts had raised their views on the third quarter, but their many were subdued about 2010.

Some talk of ending unconscious talks to combat the worst financial crisis since the 1930s is being overtaken by worth of caution on the rebound's strength before a G20 leaders summit in Pittsburgh next month to discuss financial reform.

Policymakers from around the world are gathering in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, this week to think about how to prevent the crisis from happening again. Fed Chair Ben Bernanke speaks on Friday to reflect on the lessons learned and assess whether signs of recovery are lasting.

Bank of Japan board members Atsushi Mimura and Japan's export recovery may slow, warning in the minutes, suggesting he may favor extending steps such as buying commercial paper and corporate bonds beyond December.

"Global financial and economic conditions remain fragile and can't achieve a sustained recovery without support from governments and central banks," Mimura said.

Germany's Finance Ministry said it was not clear whether the economy's return to growth is self-sustaining.

Germany posted unexpected growth in its second quarter but economists said the bounce relied heavily on government stimulus.

The US earnings picture was mixed. Packaged food makers General Mills Inc. and Kimberly-Clark Corp. both beat Wall Street estimates while weaker Sears Holdings Corp. posted a surprise loss, sending its shares down.

Hurricane Bill weakened a bit in the Atlantic but was expected to regain power on a northwest across track and was forecast to reach Canada's Atlantic Maritime provinces by Sunday. Reuters

GM still open to Opel deal

BERLIN—GENERAL MOTORS AND THE German government continued to spar over the sale of the automaker's European car business on Tuesday, days after GM rejected a deal backed by the government to sell Opel to an investor group led by Magna, in London's current financial crisis.

GM is trying to unload the Opel and Vauxhall units as part of its effort to shed unprofitable businesses.

GM Europe vice president John Smith, in a meeting with Germany's Opel Task Force of federal and state officials, made it clear Tuesday that GM still wants to sell the money-losing Opel. The sales differ from Finance Chief Timothy Geithner, one of GM pension and subsidy-guarding foreign jobs.

More talks with German officials are expected Wednesday, and Smith also will meet with Magna officials.

Tuesday's meeting came just days after GM's management board rejected the German government's aid package. The board, reconstituted after GM emerged last month from bankruptcy protection, sought more information on the aid proposal, according to a German government official who spoke on condition of anonymity given the sensitivity of the talks.

The German government favors an offer from Magna International Inc. and Russian state-owned bank Sberbank over an offer from Brussels-based Investor RHJ International SA. That's because fewer jobs are at risk under Magna's offer. The government has offered 4.5 billion euros ($6.3 billion) in credit to support the Magna bid.

GM has lost more than $80 billion in the last four years and has received about $50 billion in aid from the US government.

GM wants to focus on regions such as Latin America or Asia Pacific, which have traditionally posted operating profits, and cut North America, where it sees potential to make money due to cost reductions and new products.

A person briefed on the talks said GM values considers keeping Opel, but only as a "Plan B." The company would still prefer to give up controlling interest. A major snag has developed, though, over liability should Opel fail under its new ownership and default on its debts, said the person, who asked not to be identified because the talks are private.

The deal proposed from Germany places some of the liability on GM, wherein GM wants the government to assume the risk, the person said. Plus, the German proposal only offered aid if the Magna group succeeded Opel, the person said. AP

THE ENERGIZER Bunny appears on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange to celebrate the 20th birthday of the Energizer Bunny in New York City. Positive news on the economy pushed stocks up for the sixth straight day to close at 9,574.39. AP

Nikkei hits 10-mo. high; China rallies

HONG KONG—JAPANESE STOCKS ROSE to a 10-month high on Wednesday, driven by a modest shift into defensive sectors, while stocks in Shanghai reversed gains from the week as investors shunned corporate exodus.

Thin summer trading volumes, however, kept prices choppy and markets generally remained in ranges.

Major European stock futures were down 0.2 percent after the cash market closed in the black for the ninth straight day, while US stocks futures were up 0.4 percent set to extend gains after US single-family house prices grew for a second straight month.

The Bloomberg of German business sentiment is expected to show an uptick the board pick-up later on Wednesday, playing into the story that economies are taking solid around the world.

"There's no mistake that the economy is on a recovery track from both the macro and micro perspective, and the market is in an upward trend," said Junichi Ishimura, senior fund manager at STB Asset Management in Tokyo.

Still, having already gained in an upturn in the global economy, investors are looking for more signs that growth can be sustained once the impact of massive government stimulus spending fades.

Volatility in Chinese shares has also kept investors guessing. The Shanghai composite index rose 2.3 percent on Wednesday but has still lost around 12 percent so far in August, on track for its biggest monthly decline since the darkest months of the financial crisis in October 2008.

The precipitous move has triggered questions on whether other high flying equity markets were due for a correction.

Japan's Nikkei share average closed up 1.4 percent, at the highest since Oct. 2.

Shares of Toyota Motor, overnight Toyota Motor Corp., rose 1.3 percent as it appears the carmaker would cut global production capacity and post an upswing profit in the 2010 financial year.

However, while most of the capacity cut showed up the stock, it also weakened unease about persistent weakness in global consumer demand, subsets to key to a solid recovery.

Japan's exports dipped in July as annual declines in exports to the United States and China accelerated, a sign that the impact of stimulus measures in major economies worldwide may be starting to wane. Reuters

Asia's poverty reduction goals marred

LARGE POCKETS OF EXTREME poverty and hunger persist in Asia, where the global downturn makes it more difficult to achieve UN goals to reduce the ranks of the poor, the Asian Development Bank said Wednesday.

Supporting smaller businesses, which most Asians are employed, to keep the funding dynamic demand and growth, the Manila-based lender said in a report on key economic indicators.

In 19 Asian economies, including the most populous China and India, more than 10 percent of people live on less than $1.25 a day and more than 30 percent are malnourished. This is despite the region's success over the last 15 years in cutting the number of poor from one in two to around one in four, the report said.

Nepal is the worst off with 55.1 percent of its population surviving on less than $1.25 a day. In China and India, 15.9 percent and 41.6 percent of the population live below the poverty line, respectively.

Income gap remains wide in many other countries.

More than 36 percent of Tajikistan's population suffers from hunger, as do 29-30 percent of the people in Armenia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Mongolia, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and East Timor, the ADB said.

Among the so-called UN Millennium Development Goals is cutting in half extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 and reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters over the same period.

The report said that Asia faces serious challenges in meeting goals linked to sanitation and maternal deaths, which remain unacceptably high in countries such as Afghanistan, Nepal and Laos.

About 1,000 out of every 100,000 Afghan women die in childbirth while more than a quarter of urban households in 12 countries will lack access to improved sanitation, the report said.

For Asia to cope with the global downturn, it needs to strengthen domestic demand to sustain growth, said chief ADB economist Lee Jong-wha. Global demand for Asian exports was expected to remain sluggish, but the region could see a U-shaped recovery in 2010, he said.

Governments should focus not only on fiscal stimulus and large enterprises but on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises—where most Asians work—as well as on boosting consumer spending power, he said.

"It's unlikely that Asia can expect its way out of this slump, as they did after the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis," Lee told The Associated Press. "This crisis clearly shows that Asia cannot rely only on external demand but must diversify its sources of growth and revive its domestic industries."

Lee said the ADB will revise its growth forecast for Asia in September.

In March, the bank predicted a 2 percent growth rate in 2009 for emerging East Asian economies and 4 percent growth in 2010, which is still below the 8.7 percent expansion in 2007. AP

Toyota cuts capacity amid sales slump

TOKYO—TOYOTA MOTOR CORP., THE world's largest automaker, said it would halt a production line in Japan as it looks to cut excess capacity to return to profitability amid an industrywide sales slump.

Car plants around the world are idle or running below capacity as the industry copes with a slide in sales that sent General Motors Co. and Chrysler Group LLC into bankruptcy and has Toyota headed for a record loss this year.

Total cuts could reach 500,000 cars, or 7 percent of Toyota's global capacity including a production line in Britain that may be halted and a joint venture with General Motors in the United States likely to be closed, sources with knowledge of the matter said.

"Though sales in some countries have been picking up, the outlook for global car demand is still uncertain," said the company thinks it should be prepared, the source said.

Toyota's sales have been boosted over the past few months by government incentives aimed at kick-starting demand, but it is still plagued by an excess capacity of more than 3 million vehicles following a rapid expansion earlier in the decade.

The company said it has decided to halt a production line in Japan for about a year and a half from next spring.

"The production cut is positive for its earnings, but there is room for further capacity cuts in the United States and elsewhere," said Yoshifumi Tabei, an auto analyst at Kaiahu Securities.

Shares of Toyota closed up 1.3 percent, in line with the benchmark Nikkei average, which rose 1.4 percent.

Toyota expects to lower its break-even point by halting some assembly lines, but will not dispose of them so that it can quickly raise production in the event of a demand recovery.

Workers on the halted Japanese production line will be employed at other Toyota factories.

The source said the extent and timing of the output cuts had not yet been set but the Nikkei business daily reported that Toyota planned to reduce its global capacity by 20 percent, or 1.5 million vehicles, as early as the current financial year to March 2010.

The source, who declined to be named because the matter was not public, said Toyota was also considering halting a line at a UK plant.

Toyota has said it will decide this month whether to pull out of New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. (Nummi), a California joint venture with General Motors.

Those three moves would cut capacity by 700,000 vehicles, based on Toyota factory data, from Toyota's annual output capacity of 10 million vehicles.

Toyota has begun restricting some production cut in the wake of the global financial crisis as inventories shrink, but has yet to announce whether it plans longer-term cuts in factory capacity.

It has seen a recovery in sales of fuel-efficient cars helped by government measures to encourage car replacement, with its Prius hybrid making an Japan's top-selling car in July for the second straight month, but has lagged behind its rivals in cost-cutting.

Toyota booked an operating loss for the third straight quarter in April-June, while Honda Motor Co. and Nissan Motor Co. turned profitable during the period on hefty cost reductions measures including pulling out of some motor sports and cutting jobs. Reuters

A TOYOTA car mechanic stands in front of the company's logo at its dealership in Takasaki, Tochigi Motor Corp., the world's largest automaker, said it would halt a production line in Japan as it looks to cut excess capacity to return to profitability amid an industrywide sales slump. AFP

LIFESTYLE Food
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

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COMERFORD

By Alex T. Vergara

Filipino White House chef still hooked on 'patis'

Up close Cristeta Pasia Comerford, 46, is softspoken, especially about the Obamas

LIKE MOST FILIPINO-AMERICANS, White House executive chef Cristeta Pasia Comerford, 46, always keeps a bottle of *patis* (fish sauce) handy in her suburban Maryland home. She credits the flavorful Pinoy seasoning for keeping her adobo and other home-cooked Filipino dishes flavorful and authentic.

From daughter Danielle, 8, who's now partly

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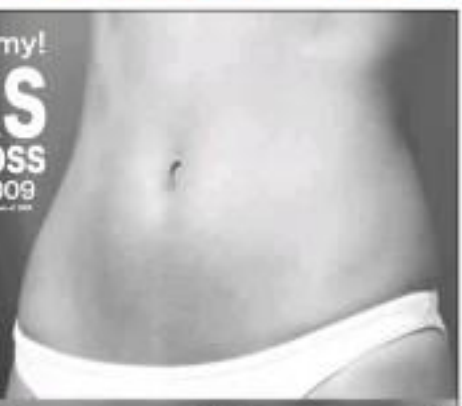

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Filipino White House chef still hooked on 'patis'

From page 01

in her awesome cubic sentimeter during meals.

This led to the third grader's decidedly unusual interest in cooking. In several "show and tell" in school, for instance, she brought mini-clay pots cooked in an egg and crabmeat custard bowl. Beloved sushi, sir, is chef-of-pots.

"She cooked it herself," said the proud mother.

That fosters American luncheon fare, she added, but in the end society, he doesn't hide his dislike for patis as staple on the Connors' dinner table, but can tell she is cooking ingredient.

"As long as it's mixed with adobo or anything during cooking, I'm fine," he said.

Comerford insisted she doesn't keep a bottle of patis in her luxurious kitchen at the White House. Still, there are certain cooking habits passed down by her mother, now 92, and living in Chicago, from the land.

"Put a Pinoy in a mother's words things," she said. "Whenever there's a disease, for example, to add extra calcium or garlic, you don't hesitate to do it, which makes for a better-tasting meal."

And thanks to the White House's famous organic vegetable patch on the South Lawn, she has easy access to okra, eggplants, tomatoes, spinach, string beans and whatever vegetables are in season.

"The Obamas are into healthy eating and enjoy simple, well-made meals," she said. "They have certain preferences like seasoned vegetables and brown rice that you'd want to do a lot."

Break

Taking advantage of her favorite chefs' summer vacation in Martha's Vineyard, Comerford, upon the invitation of Banks of the Philippine Islands (BPI), took a break from her White House duties and recently flew to Manila with Adobo magazine in tow.

As one of this year's BPIway awardees, Comerford gladly dropped everything to receive a well-deserved recognition given by BPI to outstanding Filipinos based abroad.

Apart from encouraging no-frontiers among Filipinos, the award novel, now on its fourth year and comes with a P 100,000 cash prize to be donated to the honoree's favorite charity, is part of BPI's commitment to excellence as it serves a growing number of overseas Filipino workers.

Other awardees are HR-based accountant Ely Sumobarro and academist painter Anita Magsaysay-Ho. They now join the ranks of past BPIway awardees such as Lea Salonga, Josie Natori, Monique Lhuillier, Dado Banatao, Jaqui Reyes and Rico Hizon.

"The last time I was here was six years ago to attend a high-school reunion," Comerford, a product of the country's public school system, said. "This is a special trip, as it marks the first time since I became White House executive chef. It's also Adobo's first trip to the Philippines."

Comerford, the 10th in a brood of 11, pursued a degree in food technology at the University of the Philippines before moving with her family in the US in the mid-'60s. She worked for almost a year at Hyatt Manila before working for various fine-dining restaurants in the US.

"I've always been interested in cooking," she said. "As a young girl, I would often hang out in our kitchen in Manila to watch my mother cook. It didn't take long before I started volunteering to do the family meals."

Hands-on

In 1999, then White House executive chef Walter Scheib recruited her as one of his sous chefs. When Scheib left in 2005, then First Lady Laura Bush appointed Comerford to the post, making her the first woman, first Filipino and first minority to assume the top post.

Amid speculations that the Obamas would replace Comerford with a more high-profile celebrity chef since they moved into the White House, First Lady Michelle Obama did the opposite by retaining her and later on promoting her.

Comerford has three assistants at one chefs working directly under her. On top of her executive duties, she remains hands-on.

Ms. Obama appreciates the fact that Comerford is not only a mother raising a young daughter. "I appreciate her down perspective on the importance of healthy eating and healthy families," she reportedly said.

The Comerfords would have loved to bring their daughter along but figured they didn't have enough time in a family to fully savor the trip.

The couple plans to make a day trip to Subic with a family friend and do some shopping and dining. Comerford even asked journalists where she could get a good Manny Pacquiao T-shirt, one of the items on her friends' with-list back home.

"One of the first things I did as soon as John and I were settled in our hotel was to hump to The Landmark," she said, "I headed straight to the mens section and bought a couple of shirts. Even if they sometimes have imported sources in the States, they're not as good as the ones you have here."

Modest

Up close, the veteran impressario for accommodating menus and preparing dozens of VIP family's daily meals as well as those during official state functions is modest, self-spoken and circumspect to a fault.

Comerford would rather remain vague about her famous and powerful employers' eating habits.

"She is a very busy woman with lots of responsibilities. I can't second-guess the First Lady. "She's a hands-on person, but she's not a micro-manager. She knows how to delegate."

Comerford also describes the Obamas as "normal" people. They don't have to say thank you since she and her team are simply doing their jobs, but they would often drop by the kitchen to express their appreciation.

No-maid

As for her own schedule, Comerford, who, unlike perhaps most of her colleagues in the Philippines, doesn't have a maid, is often out of the house by 5 a.m.

She says the one-hour drive to the White House is "bar" than to plan her entire day. If the Obamas have no more dinners or luncheons to attend to, she's usually home before 7 p.m. in time for dinner.

Weekends, she said, are sacred. But before the last call, the maiden says an moment is left running the post.

She now dinners and other official functions, she coordinates directly with White House social secretary Desiree Rogers weeks, sometimes months in advance.

Because of her killer schedule, she doesn't cook for the family as often as she used to. But during the rare times she does, Connors' favorite meals—pork adobo as a show of pride and a helping of patis are within easy reach.

CHEFETTE Patis Comerford and husband John (photo courtesy Malacañan)

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Filipino (Fiesta Buffet): Start: 16 | Dur: 5 hrs | Lessons: Pork Sinigang, Chicken Relleno, Pinoy Fried Chicken, Pinoy Kare-Kare | P1,200

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For more information, log on to www.themayakitchen.com; email admissions@themayakitchen.com or visit The Maya Kitchen every Tuesday to Saturday at #41 Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City or call 840-5011 local 208

Brigitte Jaymes

KITCHEN RESCUE

How to cook paella and make 'atchara'

Real paella is meant to be 'bahaghag,' not sticky

HERSHEY'S Twizzlers del Cielo

CHEF SANDRA CACHO OF Grindi has opened Tapella at Greenbelt 5. Her menu highlights include mixed-grain tapas and her menu includes paellas—Alaskan King Crab; Paella with Queso Manchego; Creamy Seafood; Greek; Ratatouille, to name a few.

Of course, Sandra's all-time specialties (such as Chabelas) can also be tried at Tapella. The highlight of my visit, though, turned out to be the desserts, comparable only to having dinner in Spain.

Her Pecan del Cielo is double—the crust is like to as dulce-jeanly satisfying. Order a whole box for Sunday lunch, it's worth it!

The sublime crème caramelo and Cuidado (a sand-like dessert) served with beans and walnuts are also also solid crowd-pleasers. (Tapella, tel. 7572719).

Paella pans

Where can I get paella pans here? I've searched department stores and specialty shops in Ermita but seem very to avail. —Cathy

La Tienda in Makati, if I recall correctly, is the cheapest place to get them. I drove recall if they sell the burners, though, and Ilene's fabulous cuisine is your direction of purchase and burners.

Here are a few paella tips:

The most I would go is a 16-12 inch paellera on a regular home stove burner. Any larger paellera will require to two burners to cook evenly.

There are generally four types of paellera: ceramic, Teflon, stainless steel, carbon steel and enameled cast which are the easiest to find here. I prefer the stainless and carbon steel. If you like tutong, the seared-rice paellera is for you.

The thickness of rice is one, cm. Real paella is meant to be bahaghag, not sticky! The ideal thickness are about three to, Cotopaxis or Mendiants. These grains allow for more absorption of liquid without the grains turning to mush. Avoid short grain rice, like Sinandomeni, typical of a Spanish paella with a lot of flavor. Please do not use Japanese rice, making it for the texture.

For the rice varieties above, use between 2½ to 3 cups of stock/liquid per cup of rice, using the same measuring cup for the rice and liquid.

Do not skimp on the quality of saffron and pimentón (Spanish paprika) either. Pre-ground saffron is okay, as are Tessy's Selection or Spices and Flavors.

(La Tienda, tel. 8893616); Tessy's Selection, tel. 8385720; 7267966/67; Spices and Flavors, tel. 7249962; Mapecon, doing big-order, tel. 0918-8208205

Archarang Papaya

I would like to request for a recipe of atcharang papaya which I intend to serve for friends' pregnancy. —Hilda D. Macalde

The only thing you must take note of when making atchara is the balance between sweetness and tartness.

Another point of consideration is the bite or crunch. Gone your green papaya according—like, medium or course, depending on your personal preference.

Pickling solution:
3 ½ c virgin vinegar, I use Lola Goodbuy Sharpie (tel. 0920-6586003)
2 c sugar
Nat ginger, julienned
2 tsp salt
1 tbsp whole peppercorns

Combine ingredients in a sauce pan, bring ingredients to a boil and simmer for 10 minutes.

Cool. Combine vegetables and pour in solution.

Can at least overnight before eating.

Vegetables:
6 c grated green papayas
1 red bell pepper, julienned
2 medium carrots cut into discs
10 shallots, peeled, whole

1 c whole garlic cloves, peeled
Grated turmeric and add ½ tsp salt
10c. Lemon papaya in salt for 20 minutes.

Wash papaya and squeeze until dry. Combine papaya with other vegetables.

Pour in pickling solution. Leave the mixture to pickle in the refrigerator at least overnight before consuming.

Indonesian variant

Another atchara recipe I learned during work to share it a mixed-vegetable achara. I learned this in Indonesia, and it pulled with ease, as well as with our leaner tastes and preferences.

Mixed Vegetable Atchara

(This does not last long and is best consumed the day after.)

Pickling solution:
3 ½ c rice vinegar
½ c water
3 tbsp white sugar
2 pc ginger
2 tbsp salt
1 dash fresh turmeric (chopping allow or ½ tsp turmeric powder)
2 tsp salt
Follow instruction for pickling solution above.

Vegetables:
½ c each—broccoli florets, cauliflower florets, corn, carrot flags (thin), okra (ends trimmed)
Blanch vegetables briefly and shock in cold water.
Nat garlic—shallots, whole; bell pepper, large discs; cucumber, large discs
Leave these vegetables raw.

Last chance to join me this Saturday for a culinary trip to Thai. My Pinoy Cooking Series starts next week. My Coffee & Bakeshop is ongoing and so are my regular cooking classes. For inquiries, call 8288286, 8373808, 847-4744, 0908-2072346.

Email the author at ruiz@inquirer.com.ph

Banana crumble or 'matamis na saging' modernized

PDI LIFESTYLE KITCHEN-TESTED RECIPE

Heirs to Everybody's Café's famous legacy updates well-loved recipes

By Norma Chikiamco
Contributor

PETITE SANTOS JOAQUIN is one lucky lady. Aside from having the keeper of her parents' heirloom recipes, the now finds two of her children doing their own fresh takes on classic Kapampangan cuisine.

It was Petite's parents, Benito and Carmen Santos, who opened Everybody's Café in San Fernando, Pampanga, shortly after World War II. From a tiny eatery operation, the restaurant grew and eventually became a byword in fine cooking and good food.

Today, in preparation of P&J Everybody's Cafe, Petite continues her parents' legacy by using the same recipes that started their restaurant rolling.

The current menu includes Tagalog favorites as embodied in a made of ground pork, queso de bola, chorizo, egg yolks, garlic and tomatoes, all steamed for six hours before being served with thick gravy.

The polished has a sprinkling of chicharon on top and is served in a sauce thickened with ground rice.

The ube (thick, coconut pudding topped with toasted coconut gratin), is made to the old-fashioned way with fresh ube (taro) roots.

For August, Sheryl Lone Cosmiano, café Everybody is serving some of these best loved dishes in the Sunday Uncle from brinjhe (rice cooked in coconut milk), *asadong dila* (ox tongue stewed in tomatoes) and chicken relleno (stuffed chicken stew with liver, olives and raisins).

Banana Crumble

6-10 pcs saba banana
1 c brown sugar
1 t vanilla
2 tbsp cornstarch
2 ½ c sugar
1 c all-purpose flour
¼ c slightly softened margarine (or butter)

Slice each banana diagonally into three to four pieces. In a large pot, combine bananas, sugar and water. Bring to a boil then lower heat to simmer. Let simmer until liquid is thick and syrupy and bananas are tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease 13 inch pan.

In a bowl, combine cinnamon, sugar and flour. Cut in the butter and mix with your hands or by using two knives scissor-style until mixture is crumbly.

Divide the cooked bananas and the syrup evenly in ramekins. Top each ramekin with the prepared crumble. Bake in preheated oven for about 20 minutes or until tops are golden brown. Makes 8 servings.

Optional: If desired, set aside a few banana pieces for decoration. After baking, decorate the ramekins with sliced powdered sugar, banana and cheese.

Banana Crumble

The menu also includes the old-time versions of old-time recipes made by two of Petite's children, Thomas and Jack Antolin.

These creations include pastillas de leche (homemade topped with dulce de leche cheese soup made with dehydrated skim of fresh cow's milk) and *buko* (young coconut) strips that imitate the rice Bibingka and banana crumble, native sabe bananas baked in ramekins.

Growing up in a house just above their grandparents' beloved café, Thomas and Jack learned to cook as children. A graduate of Ecole Culinaire, Thomas has worked in such temples of high cuisine as Avec Georges Vongerichten's Jojo Market in New York, Aspic in San Francisco, and Alice Waters' Chez Panisse Restaurant. Yet the late Thomas is content to return to Manila and continue the family heritage.

Here's the Antolins' recipe for banana crumble, a modernized version of matamis na saging na saba.

(Kapampangan cuisine is served at *Café Everybody*, tel. 703-7066; cont'd. pg. 21.)

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Ravioli di Zucca, other rustic Italian goodies

They're prepared by Michelin-star guest chef Marco Pedrolli at the Mandarin Oriental

By Yasmin Baga-Reyes

FOR THREE MORE DAYS, lovers of Italian food can partake of real, gourmet Italian goodness prepared by a Michelin-starred guest chef, Marco Pedrolli, in Le Dolce Vita, an Italian food festival ongoing at the Mandarin Oriental, Manila's The Travel.

Pedrolli, who flew in from Mandarin Oriental, Singapore, and chef de cuisine of the renowned Dolce Vita, creates a very rustic Italian menu for Filipino diners to enjoy.

Among his well-acclaimed recipes in classic Pedrolli di Zucca, braised pumpkin, stuffed ravioli with bacon, king scallops and white tomato foam; Pappa Tortora, Tuscan-style bread bar goo with arugula pantesca cheese and shallot balsamic sauce; Medaglie, cod fish fillet on bruschetta, abalone sauce; Ligurian vegetables and cuttlefish hash; and Torta di Frutta e Gorgonzola, goat cheese poached pear with dolce latte gorgonzola.

"We basically serve the same menu in Singapore, but I've made some adjustments and tweaked it a bit to give it a more contemporary approach," Pedrolli, "A typical rustic Italian dish is often prepared in a very simple presentation, but it's beautiful with flavors using traditional but fine gastronomic dish."

Pedrolli brings along with him his considerable resume of cooking experience in renowned Michelin-star restaurants. He has even received rave for himself.

Prior to joining Mandarin in Singapore, he was chef de cuisine at Ecrevisse in Suhrsee, Austria. Helming the fine dining restaurant Ecrevisse, Pedrolli led the restaurant to attain its first Michelin star in 2008.

Tomorrow, Pedrolli is tasked to dish out an elegant consumer Italian-flavored menu during The Truth monthly Night of Wine and Fine Dining. He takes diners on a gastronomic tour of fine gras, prepared in mousse, paired with poached, or baked Lacroix, or Pepper Tuscan Chianti. He also prepares Scampi Rosti, poached langoustines with Italian risotto, green asparagus and avocado leaf tip sauce, and Spaghetti & Vitello, veal tenderloin with mashed bisque, bacon and green pine puree, and Bacon and pepper jus.

Of course, besides the pouring of paired wines is part of the event.

Pedrolli also holds a cooking demonstration on Aug. 29, 9:30 a.m., at The Truth (tel. 750-0000). Featured dishes include homemade Tagliatelle with Osso Bucco Ragout, Pan-fried Crusted lamb Loin with cremoso thyme potatoes, Tiramisu gateaux and garden basil jus, and Southern Croquettes, a roasted Tahitian vanilla sorbet with white rice snow-flavored sorbet. The dinner is priced at P2,500 inclusive of a continental breakfast and a lunch coupon. The Italian food festival runs until Aug. 29.

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The classic and modern Filipino in Cagayan de Oro tilt

BACK FROM ANOTHER culinary competition and this time, in Cagayan de Oro for the "Kambira," we found unbelievable the number of culinary schools in that region.

There were entries not only from Misamis Oriental, but also from Agusan, Bukidnon, Lanao, North Cotabato and Misamis Occidental. It must have been a well-attended encounter for those coming from outside of Cagayan de Oro because, apart from joining the contests, they could also see the sights on the way to their destination (most come by land). Many were also seen going to sightseen in gaudy clothes.

For many of the judges from Manila, visiting this northern Mindanao city is always a pleasure. We look forward to seeing the organizers who have become friends and to savoring the fresh (but cool air—lots) and a leg in Manila—durian, marang, pomelo and mangosteen.

But one of the dinners—the invited chefs' judges cooked for the hosts. Steaks were grilled to a good medium rare and medium. Grilled prawns were given the source of tube ng talangka (crab fat) cooked with coconut cream. The Thai soup, Tom yay, was a big production of buying ingredients (pesto was difficult to come by because the Cagayan de Oro population can't stomach Italian), and Visayans don't use fish sauce in cooking) and cooking the chicken and curry sauce.

Cagayan lechon

The soup was what exactly was needed for a sitting due of judging. It was not as hot as the chef wanted it to be because there were no dried chili to be found, only fresh siling labuyo (dried chili is more "lethal"). But we sniffed throughout the meal anyway as the spicy soup opened up our sinuses.

Always present in dinners there in the Cagayan lechon and boiled pig. We are so proud of our lechon because them, it (lechon) costs half or less price in Manila. Gives the bargain prices of salad greens.

At competitions, contestants are briefed about rules and disbriefed about rules and violation of our hosts

ENTERTAINMENT

Will Lea Salonga do a Lady Gaga?

TWO WEEKS AFTER ANNOUNCING IN HER COLUMN THAT the public is invited to send song requests for her Dec. 11 and 12 concerts at the PICC, Lea Salonga held a press con, saying she wrote "none" on seeing Amy Winehouse's "Rehab" and Lady Gaga's "Poker Face" among the more than 1,500 entries so far. Meanwhile, in her column today, Lea shares rebuffs I made on even getting that fabulous look in particular. *Read story 4D*

Listening with the heart

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT'S HOOKED THE AUDIENCE ANEW AT this year's Cinemalaya, Mike Sandejas' "Dinig Sana Kita" swallowed its heavy (for feeling) crowd favorite, an honor swiped happily through a "unique and compelling" storytelling and the "beautiful and sincere" performances of lead stars Romalito "Rom" Muñar and Zoe Sandejas.

As filmmaker Ana Javier Reyes noted in an Internet review of the festival, "[Zoe and Rom] brought the CCP [Cultural Center of the Philippines] auditorium to tears and close hysterics."

That Zoe is the daughter of the director and Dingdong is really hearing-impaired imbued the film with heartbreaking honesty.

TAKE FIVE

What was the hardest part of doing the film?

Rom: Mahirap. I had a hard time communicating with those who could hear. Sometimes I didn't understand. But I took it as a challenge. (Rom can speak and sign.)

Zoe Sandejas: Shifting emotions was hard. I had to make sure my character's mood was the right one to each sequence because we didn't shoot chronologically. Learning sign language was difficult, too. One sentence would be like one whole dance sequence.

How did you relate to your character and prepare for the part?

RM: It's a lot like mine. Dinah Mike wrote a story close to my heart. I prepared by joining a workshop under Dinah Lauren Cuthbert.

I'm so happy to be the first deaf actor to take on a lead role in a [local] film. I want to encourage other directors to open their

(CONTINUED ON 5A)

Meet the two 'beautiful, sincere' stars of 'Dinig Sana Kita'

JESSICA Biel

BEYONCE

Jessica Biel 'most dangerous' celeb

NEW YORK—JESSICA BIEL IS THE MOST dangerous celebrity on the Web.

Security technology company McAfee Inc. on Tuesday released [the] searches for the 25 year-old actress are more likely to lead to online threats such as spyware and viruses than searches for any other celebrity.

McAfee said after searching for the actress' name a cumulative cluster of malicious Web sites designed to damage one's computer in the third annual report on the subject from McAfee, which said was found that Brad Pitt was the "most dangerous" celeb online.

BRAD Pitt [on] year's... [re]port [the]...

"Cybercriminals are not watchers, too," said Jeff Green, senior vice president of McAfee's product development. "They tech-savvy[ies] celebrities to encourage the download of malicious software to disguise."

Following Biel in the report, in order, were Beyonce, Jennifer Aniston, Tom Brady and Jessica Simpson.

McAfee asked President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama are curiously safe searches, ranking No. 54 and No. 58, respectively. AFP

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A. LINYN BY JOE ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY BY PH. LINDIO

DICK TRACY

LOVEBANGS BY ELIZABETH CHICANGCO

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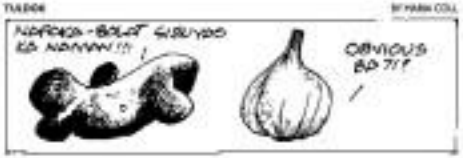


BEN BY DARREL SHELTON

KEBOO AND WOOFY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

BIKO MACHINE BY MANOS ARRERA

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS CRAIG

YOU BORN TODAY: You're idealistic and socially aware. You know what's going on around you, within society, and the world at large. In romance, you identify with the underdog. You want to help others and are fortunate that you (Aquarius) are also your (Scorpio) sun sign, which is compatible with the love of others. This year, something new and fresh will happen because you're beginning a new cycle. Open any door!

Birthstone: Aquamarine or Blue Topaz **Month:** Aquarius: Dive Into Spring **Color:** Fuchsia **Number:** 6

ARIES (March 21 to April 20). Financially, the start time has significance in the way you approach money today. Different? That's why you have a driving need to do something different. You want to get outta Dodge!

TAURUS (April 21 to May 21). Your relationships with almost everyone matters. Family, work, coworkers, friends, lovers, neighbors—you're in a mood to connect with someone and motivating people motivates you. You can get your desires met by helping others get theirs.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). You'll have to go across town (subway, train, bus, car, bicycle, skateboard, etc.) to get what you want today. Fortunately, because the Moon is in a really agreeable zone right now, this is a good day to do it.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22). Since the hygiene theme today, I have chosen your sun sign because your health, it's also a good day to focus on the inside of your pet.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22). Concerned by accumulating tendencies, creating or encouraging a change? Do you want to play? Take a mini vacation. Work is important. Watch some sports. Online good times make friends.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22). Today is about help. Focus on home and family issues. Disagreements with family members can be painful. Be patient and understanding.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22). Today is about help. Focus on home and family issues. Disagreements with family members can be painful. Be patient and understanding.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21). Today is about help. Focus on home and family issues. Disagreements with family members can be painful. Be patient and understanding.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21). You have just a little bit of extra good luck in your life today. Enjoy this! It's always nice to have an added bonus.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19). Work seems to befriend the planets today. You have some plans and quick. Kick back and relax. Avoid bad arguments. Do what you can and things turn your mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18). Interesting people with a female friend could be important today. Why not increase your interest in somebody else? Discuss and hopes for the future.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20). Some aspect of your private life will positively be made public today. Knowing this, dress with care and be aware that people are looking you to do.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		3	8		2	5		
			6			3		
8							2	4
3	4							6
				7				
6							8	1
1	3							9
		5			8			
		4	5		7	8		

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	8	3	4	7	5	2	6
6	2	5	9	8	1	3	4	7
4	3	7	5	6	2	8	1	9
8	4	3	7	2	9	6	5	1
1	5	6	8	3	4	7	9	2
2	7	9	6	1	5	4	8	3
5	6	4	2	9	8	1	7	5
7	9	1	4	5	3	2	6	8
3	8	2	1	7	6	9	3	4

Strike a pose and say, 'Cheese!'

ON MONDAY AFTERNOON, "YOUR SINGLE" HELD A PRESS conference at the City Best Chinese Restaurant on Timog Morato (thanks so much to our friends from the press for spending your precious time with us, as well as to the owners and staff of City Best for being so amazingly hospitable!). We planned a mock-up of the artwork for the concert and invited our concept artist, the multitalented people person, I did a Q&A with the reporters as well as a few quick one-on-ones.... and nosebleed. A lot.

BACK STORY

Ervic Vanhoyza

One part of doing press conferences is smiling for the cameras. There are some eight emails in front of you, editors on both sides. Thankfully, our photographers are incredibly polite; no "banner screaming" to get them angel's attention.

After delivering the press conference, it was time to head to a photo shoot for a popular glossy magazine. Instead of a roundtable, the lighting for this setup was deliberate, carefully placed to highlight my features as well as the fabulous makeup and hair job and the fun clothes.

Till your head, dots down ... look straight at the camera, birdie, please!

One part of any celebrity's job is to honor his or her patrons taken. Whether it's for an album cover, a magazine spread, a press gathering, or even that random fan pic taken in a tipping session, it's our job to pose and smile for the camera wanted in our direction.

Unflattering photographs

Unfortunately, however, there are some unflattering photographs taken, as evidenced by the (in talkback) dribble down of celebs in their bikinis, by unscrupulous. These are shots we rarely always control, and I'm envious of the celeb who always seems to look fabulous regardless of the circumstance. I've seen some pictures of myself that I just don't give a second glance to, because of a bad angle, an overly oily complexion, or just looking more than a few pounds overweight.

For the most part, though, I'm quite happy with the pictures taken of me, even under the least ideal of circumstances ... but happier when the photo is taken in that wonderfully controlled environment.

Allow me to share a few secrets on how those magazine and album covers, posters and billboards are made to look simply fabulous.

A top-notch photographer. There are many of these talented artists working today: Raymund Isaac, Sonnie Lobrutos, Sara Black and Francis Abrahams are a few favorites I've worked with. They are great people with a great eye. They each have different styles of working (Raymund spends eighteen hours to make a shot he really likes, and Francis will play YouTube videos while waiting for the next setup), but each brings his unique sense of beauty and humor to every shoot. There are also photographers I've never worked with, but whose works I really love—Marc Nadua and Jojit Lorenzo are two of them. Here's hoping for an opportunity in the future.

Makeup! I glance a lot of videos on, and trust me, the hands that handle my face for a photo shoot ... names like Jane Suite III, Steven Tolosa, Tibi Laurel Hernandez and Bogie Serrano are but a few of those I've worked with over the last many years. Again, each of them brings a unique style and aesthetic to the table while enhancing the mood of their work. One specialties are their "fresh and dewy" look, another is "old Hollywood" glamour. I love that my face looks just a little bit different depending on who's taking care of me, but that it still looks like me.

Bag of tricks

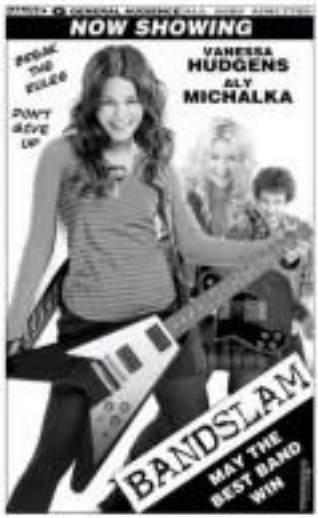
Fabulous clothing. When a stylist is in charge of the look, he or she takes to the shoot a clothing rack filled with possibilities: blouses, dresses, gowns, sweaters, T-shirts, coats and jackets, plus all kinds of shoes, and baubles, bangles and beads. Also included in that virtual bag of tricks are safety pins, clumps of different sizes and stashing tape. A lot of the time, stylist will borrow clothes by different designers, so some stuff from different stores. Some of my friends ... and a lot of the time the clothes will not be a perfect fit. Sometimes, something will be too long (safety pins needed for the cuff on those jeans), too big (clumps fastened down the back of that oversized blouse), and stashing tape to taper the sleeves, or to cinch (proper to the only hope). So that perfect shot, it doesn't matter how it was achieved—as long as you look fine on the back, it's all about how it flatters your best options.

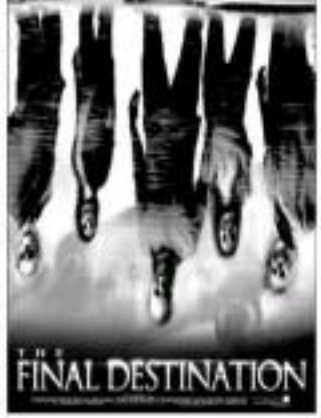
Striking that perfect pose, it could (in this case, posts really) will be honored on posts. I've oftentimes found myself contorted in some of the strangest positions. I'll be asked to turn my head here ... then there ... raise an arm, angle my elbow in a certain way, lean against a wall to my head! I know which angles work best for my face, but I also put my trust in the photographer to place my face (and the rest of me) in the most flattering pose.

Frank Wildhorn & Friends

I'll be on my way to Las Vegas! I shall be visiting your city very soon to sing in "Frank Wildhorn and Friends" with Linda Eder, Bob Evans and Douglas Sills. He shall be singing songs from "Jekyll & Hyde," "Dracula" and "The Scarlet Pimpernel," plus songs from his Wildhorn's newest pieces. We'll be at the CCP.

See you all then!





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6 UP (Digital 3D)
7 BANDSLAM
8 Indie/Sine: DING SANA KITA
9 TAROT
10 THE TIME'S TRAVELER'S WIFE

ERMITA

1 SHORTS
2 UP
3 DISTRICT 9
4 G.I. JOE / THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE
5 AND I LOVE YOU SO
6 BANDSLAM
7 TAROT

METRO EAST

1 DISTRICT 9
2 SHORTS
3 THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE
4 BANDSLAM
5 UP
6 TAROT
7 G.I. JOE
8 AND I LOVE YOU SO

NOVALICHES

1 DISTRICT 9
2 TAROT
3 SHORTS
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

PIONEER

1 DISTRICT 9
2 TAROT
3 SHORTS
4 BANDSLAM

STA. ROSA

1 DISTRICT 9
2 THE HANGOVER
3 TAROT
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

LIPA

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 TAROT
3 DISTRICT 9
4 G.I. JOE

DASMARINAS

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2 TAROT
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 G.I. JOE

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2 TAROT
3 SHORTS
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2 TAROT
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 THE HANGOVER

TACLOBAN

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2 G.I. JOE
3 UP

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2 TAROT
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4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
5 UP
6 ECHELON CONSPIRACY

ILOILO

1 DISTRICT 9
2 TAROT
3 G.I. JOE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
5 UP
6 NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

REALITY talent winners Geoff Taylor and Precious Ira Paro

New 'Big Stars' define 'star'

PRECIOUSIRA PARO AND GEOFF TAYLOR, big winners of GMA-7's "Are You the Next Big Star" reality talent search, are bullish about the future.

"I'm prepared to explore all opportunities that the network offers," says Star Taylor says he's "willing to face anything, even intrigues."

The two became instant millionaires, too, each winning P1 million in cash and a recording contract with GMA Artist Center and a second deal with GMA Records.

For now part of her P1 million will go to the construction of the family home in Las Piñas. Taylor, whose father is American, says he'll buy a car and visit his dad in San Diego, California." Both are considering moving in their condo units.

How would they describe a "star"?

Taylor says a star is "someone genuine, decent and careful about his every move." Star says a star is "an inspiration." She hopes to encourage everyone to fulfill their dreams."

Reporter: Sam Diego Jr.

Listening...

To see page D1

hearts and reach out. In De La Salle College of Saint Benilde, the deaf and the hearing are encouraged to work together. We believe that, always, the deaf can!

DI: I learned a lot from Mr. et Lazatin. We deaf also helped with the process of creating the character Lipit Bibi and pieces from current players. I borrow a lot on Winona Ryder and Angelina Jolie's characters in "Girl, Interrupted." I also took parts from my classmates, former band mates and from my life as well.

What was it like working with your co-stars?

BH: Zoe and I found that we could work well together. We showed everyone how the hearing and the deaf can communicate even without sign language.

DI: Bobie is very funny. He hardly talks, but his gestures and facial expressions are hilarious. I will never be able to forget that fact deaf. There's never a dull moment with him.

How did you grow or change as a person after Hide Mo?

BH: I've grown a lot as a person. It made me learn more about myself and my abilities as a deaf actress. Direk Mike said this film is like my "resume" to it for life. "I'm hoping for a miracle—that through this film, I'll find my birth parents. I want to meet them.

DI: I've learned to appreciate everything that I have. I've learned to respect others despite their difficulties.

What are your future plans?

BH: I don't know what the future will bring. I hope to do another movie like "Lihis." I used to have more faith that it will happen.

DI: I'm not expecting anything. Acting is just chubby for me. But financially, it's the family business. I just want to see where this adventure will take me. I would be game to do this again.

"Deaf" started a small, long run yesterday at Bulaklak Robinsons Galleria.

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Madz at the CCP tomorrow

THE WORLD-RENOWNED FILIPINO Madrigal Singers will be featured in "Madz Mixed Love ... Madz Mixed Music," a two-night concert series tomorrow and on Aug. 29 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Founded in 1963 by National Artist for Music Andrea Veneracion, the group — fondly called the Madz — has brought pride and honor to the country by consistently emerging major prizes in the most prestigious international competitions for decades, including the 2007 European Grand Prix for Choral Singing in Italy.

The shows mark a homecoming for the group after its July 2009 performance in Paris as the newly designated Ambassador of Goodwill of the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (Unesco). The Madz will be helping Unesco in its programs that promote cultural diversity through music.

The CCP shows will also coincide with the launch of "Madz in Love Continues" (Sony Music), the group's sixth and latest album which contains a cappella interpretations of classic and contemporary pop songs such as "Love of My Life," "How Old You Know," "Where You Are Nothing At All," "How That I Have You" and "Your Love."

The tracks were arranged by Christopher Barrido, the group's assistant choirmaster who also sings as a concert tenor.

What sets the Madz apart from other choirs? "Others move and dance, but the Madz has kept singing while seated," says the group's international relations officer Claudette Gabaza. "But what's also interesting is the members sit around not according to their voice classifications, but in mixed fashion."

The Madz' members are mostly students from the UP College of Music. Drawn to varsity athletics, the group has formed Madz Et Al — an umbrella organization consisting of some 40 other choirs that carry on the Madrigal Singers' 46-year tradition.

SHOW TIME

UP Madrigal Singers

John Lloyd: Breaking up is hard to do

By Marinel R. Cruz

THREE MONTHS AFTER CONFIRMING his breakup with fashion magazine editor girlfriend Lia Uy, actor John Lloyd Cruz says he's happy that their communication from bare-requested "hi" to a friendship renewed.

"Yes, we regularly talk on the phone. I know she recently got back from Boracay. Where she is heading to, I really can't say yet. We're friends; that's all we are right now," John Lloyd told a group of reporters during a gathering hosted by Cherry Mobile at the 360 North Event in Quezon City.

Both John Lloyd and Lia refused to reveal why their three-year relationship ended. Unconfirmed reports said this was because John Lloyd was romantically involved with Stella Gonzalez, his co-star in the defunct soap opera "Betty La Fea." The actor has denied this.

John Lloyd said the breakup was harder than he cared to admit. "I went through a dose of pain. I thought for [the relationship]. I'm ingrate for being pessimistic, but at some point, I really had no choice but to accept the truth," he said. "I learned a lot from the experience. Above all, it was learning to accept [things I cannot change]. Now, I see promise. I know good things are bound to come my way."

JOHN Lloyd: "I was never the first time we met afterwards."

'We're OK'

The 26-year-old actor added: "The fact that we're OK now doesn't mean I can openly talk about [it. I (myself) wouldn't want Lia telling you about stuff I consider really personal. I'm not comfortable talking about our relationship. Lia and her family might not like it, either."

However, John Lloyd was comfortable enough to share what happened the first time he met Lia after the breakup. "This happened when she got back from a trip to Europe, and I...from New York. I felt so tense. Nanginig ang tuhod ko. I found that hard to explain," the actor recalled. "I guess it's because Lia played a big role in my life."

John Lloyd will be seen, starting on Sept. 16, in the Star Cinema movie "In My Life," with Bangus Gov Vilma Santos and her son Luis Manzano. Portions of the Olivo-Laxamana film were shot in New York.

"I feel blessed. I just finished my dream project. Parehas sexy in show business, sumikat ka rin sabi, still active," said John Lloyd, also a host of the locally-versioned "RAP TV" on Channel 2.

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STEVE Zahn and Jennifer Aniston

Steve Zahn on film with Jen Aniston: I'm perfect for this!

HOLLYWOOD DIRECTOR STEPHEN Belber, on Jennifer Aniston, his female lead in the "unlikely romance" comedy "Management":

"Jennifer was approaching this film in the same way I had, which, yes, it's funny and cute and weird, but it's also coming from a genuine place. Just talking with her the first time, I felt she got that about this movie, and she was willing to go there. And, obviously, her career is firing in ground couldn't be better and I know that...going in."

Male lead Steve Zahn says he knew, "on first reading, and without ever talking to the filmmakers" that he had to play Mike, who has to fight for the woman he loves against one very big odds: a rogue named ex-boyfriend. "I really thought, 'Man, I'm perfect for this,'" Zahn recalls.

OVERHEARD